THERE ARE SERMONS IN BOOKS

WILLIAM L. SLEDGER

EVANGELICAL
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

THERE ARE SERMONS IN BOOKS

WILLIAM L. STIDGER

THERE ARE SERMONS IN BOOKS

BY

WILLIAM L. STIDGER

AUTHOR OF "FLASH-LIGHTS FROM THE SEVEN SEAS," "STANDING ROOM ONLY," "STAR DUST FROM THE DUGOUTS," "OUTDOOR MEN AND MINDS," ETC.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

BISHOP EDWIN HOLT HUGHES

BV
4241
.S8543
1922

37.881

8562

EVANGELICAL
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

NEW YORK
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

252
5

COPYRIGHT, 1922,
BY GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DEDICATED TO

BISHOP FRANCIS J. McCONNELL

IN APPRECIATION OF THE WHITE LIGHT OF
A NEW AND VITAL LEADERSHIP IN THE
SOCIAL DEMOCRACY OF CHRIST
AND HIS CHURCH

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
C 4 1956

INTRODUCTION

The writer of this volume is already so well known, both by reason of his previous books and by reason of his striking success as a pastor, as to require no new introduction. Therefore, these words of preface must be gathered around my personal knowledge of him and around the particular quality and purpose of this publication.

I knew the grandfather of the writer, an old-fashioned family doctor in what was then a small West Virginia town, knew him with that reverence and confidence that a small boy gives to a beloved physician who comes often into the home. I knew his father too, a gentleman in whose soul idealism has ceased not to shine in the nearly half-century of my friendship for him. And this young writer himself I have known through the years, since I had the privilege of assigning him to his first charge.

That first charge consisted of a sand-lot and upon it a newly built cottage of a church. His first audience consisted of five persons, if I recall correctly. But the characteristic that appears in this volume and elsewhere saved that situation.

The inspiration and the drama of the faithful minister joined the sand and the California stars into a unity; turned the small sanctuary into Bunyan's Palace Beautiful; lifted a Revolving Cross skyward until the aged and invalids desired their couches so placed that the flash of that symbol of loving sacrifice should come often to their eyes. Directly the wee church was touched with romance and was crowded with people—the dramatic and the human drawing them toward the holy altars.

The romance in the Preacher takes another turn in these pages toward a field where dramatic pen and voice will have their good play. Herein are interpretations of books where the moral and spiritual element exists but does not always come to the Christian focus. The advantages of treatment are several.

First, those who have read the volumes thus religiously reviewed may return to the chapters with a new and deeper meaning. Sometimes we get only the bare surface of a story. We read John Fox's "The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come" or his "Trail of the Lonesome Pine" and deem each book a love-story, whereas one shows what you can do with a mountain-white boy and the other what you can do with a mountain-white girl, if one will give each of them a fair chance. Careless readers of the books, herein dis-

cussed, may return to those books for another revelation.

Second, many people will be sent to read these books, and sent with a good preconception toward the spiritual. Some of these sermon reviews deal with books that are obscure; partly because they are foreign. This volume will send many readers to them for every clergyman is a circulator of books, a real educator. After a few years of ministerial life he is surprised to discover how many persons read the books that he names in his public discourses; and it is fine when the religious teacher sends readers to volumes with a preparation that may enable them to find Christ amid the paragraphs.

Third, the books treated in these sermons are occasionally supplemented in that the good of spiritual life, even Christ Himself, is added to a volume that from the Christian standpoint is not adequate. In at least one of these sermons we see one who wavered between villainy and heroism and never went the full way of spiritual glory because he never located Calvary. Thus this preacher does what the novelist did not do. In a way this book might claim for itself what a Gospel said: "These things are written that we might believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; and that believing you might have life in His name."

So as a friend of the author and a friend of the volume's purpose, I bid him and I bid it a prayerful Godspeed.

EDWIN HOLT HUGHES.

Boston, Massachusetts.

FOREWORD

WHY "THERE ARE SERMONS IN BOOKS"

I am not sending this book forth into the world on my own initiative, but at the suggestion of the publishers.

Letters have been pouring into my own office and into the office of the George H. Doran Company from preachers all over America asking for the names of books to use as a basis for "There Are Sermons in Books." This flood of letters both to myself and to the publishers is due to two things.

The first thing that caused an interest in "There Are Sermons in Books" as far as its connection with me personally is concerned, was an article which I wrote for "The Bookman," telling of how I have used this idea in my Sunday evening sermons. The second reason for this flood of letters was my discussion of this idea in a former book for preachers which I called "Standing Room Only."

This present book is in answer to this demand on the part of the publishers and also in answer to these many letters which both I myself and the

George H. Doran Company have been receiving from preachers.

For more than a year now, with few breaks, I have been preaching what I call "Book Sermons." I have done so because I have discovered that this method of homiletics is what might be called "pragmatic." It works. It works in several ways.

The first way that it works is in its lure. It brings the folks. They want to know about books. It is the best advertising attraction that I know for a Sunday evening service. The second way in which it works is that it gives me a chance to preach the old Gospel of "Good News" and the great spiritual truths in a new way.

I will say quite frankly, that after trying this method of preaching now and then for five years, I discovered that it was the best drawing power I could announce. And further, after using this method exclusively for almost a year, I find it is still the best way that I can command to attract men to my church.

I have had several questions asked about this method. One of the first questions was, "Will it not get to be monotonous? After using the same method for a month, will people not get tired of it? Do you not think it would be wise to get more of a variety?"

My answer is that it is possible to get as great

a variety of sermon themes through the book sermon as any other way. Each book is different; each book has a different group of characters to make live before an audience; each book is written by a different author and under different conditions. One can find a constant variety. After a year's use of the book sermon, and that almost constantly, I say most emphatically that it has infinite variety. The folks still crowd and overflow a great auditorium to hear the sermons.

I have demonstrated in this book the variety that can be obtained in the types of books used. The first division of the book is devoted to the book sermon in narrative poetry. I have given several illustrations of this type of sermon. The second division of the book is devoted to sermons in the novel. I have given two illustrations of the use of novels which are not what might be called modern novels. I have also given illustrations of the use of books of fiction that may certainly be called new. The last section of the book is devoted to an illustration of book sermons from non-fiction literature.

As any imaginative person will know, this book could be amplified to ten times its present size by including any one of the hundreds of book sermons which I myself have used. I have not amplified the book but instead of that I have given a long list of hundreds of poems, novels and non-

fiction books that I have either used or intend to use as book sermons. I want to make the book as useful and suggestive as possible.

Which leads me to say that I am writing this book for the Preacher. I do not have any other audience in mind. I have in mind the alert preacher who wants to put new life, vigor, and variety into his preaching. I am seeing the faces of the hundreds of preachers who have written and asked me to send them lists of the books that I have used; I am thinking in fraternal love of the men with whom I have already had correspondence about hard tasks; men who labor in communities where church going is a matter of indifference.

I want to help break the ice of this indifference. I know that it can be done. I have seen this book sermon idea do it in villages, small towns and cities.

On a certain Sunday night I used "If Winter Comes." It was a rainy, cold Winter night. We always expect large crowds, but I was not looking for an overflow crowd. The church was filled and overflowing an hour before time for the service. My ushers were surprised and so was I.

"I feel it in my bones that we'll not have a large crowd to-night," said my head-usher about six o'clock. Then the deluge began. Before time to start the services we had filled our 2,200 seats.

Then we put in 600 chairs in every available inch of seating room. Then people began to stand up and finally, finding no seats, they began to go away. Many sat on the stone steps leading up to the auditorium.

I learned later that nearly every librarian in the city was there.

Why?

Interested in the book.

The next day, two of the largest book stores in town reported to me that before noon on Monday they had noticed a strong increase in the sales on this book and that several people frankly told them that they had heard the sermon on this book at my church.

Which leads me to say that this is also one of the most valuable reactions to these book sermons. It makes people buy and read good books. That night our own book stands in the church lobbies sold out of "If Winter Comes," as the people were passing out.

I have ample precedent for this idea of "There Are Sermons in Books," for Dr. Hyde's Yale lectures used somewhat this same method. Jesus Christ Himself taught in parables and used what might be called dramatic book sermons from the library of the Old Testament. Bishop Quayle of the Methodist Episcopal Church has become famous through his great stirring dramatic book

lectures and sermons. All I claim is that I have mined this vein of golden homiletics and that the further I dig into it, the wider the vein becomes and the richer it assays to the ton. I feel that I am just beginning.

I have not written this book as if I had an audience before me. I have rather written it to show what may be done with a dramatic book sermon. I do not pass these sermons on as sermons but as suggestive ideas to preachers. Each one may take the outlines that I have put into these chapters and develop them according to his own personality and powers. I have merely suggested, in a crude way, what may be done. Many preachers will undoubtedly work these chapters out more perfectly than I.

I have shown how these books may be linked up with the eternal truths found in the Bible. Some men may want to put more Bible into these sermons. That is a simple matter. Some may want to use more illustrations from life. I do myself when I preach them, but I have not included the illustrations in these chapters. That would make the book too long.

I do not send this book out with any idea that these chapters are polished pieces of gold. They are just a group of nuggets that I have taken from the vein of gold of which I have spoken. Let each preacher polish them to suit. This is not a liter-

ary venture. I have not heard anywhere that they get gold nuggets with a pen. They get them with picks. Let somebody else do the finishing touches. I am content to hand on the nugget in the rough.

If this book is helpful to preachers who are earnestly desiring to "Go out into the highways and byways and compel them to come in," then I shall feel happy in that knowledge.

I want to thank the publishers of the books which I have used in these chapters for their permission to quote freely from the volumes that I have selected from a list of five hundred as illustrations of the possibilities of "There Are Sermons in Books."

For privilege to quote from "The Resurrection" I am grateful to The Macmillan Company of New York. For privilege to quote from Edwin Markham's poems, "The Shoes of Happiness," "The Juggler of Touraine," "How the Great Guest Came," I thank both the publishers, Doubleday, Page & Co. and Mr. Markham himself. For privilege to quote from "The Passion for Life" I offer gratitude to the author, Mr. Joseph Hocking, and to his publishers, Fleming H. Revell Company of New York. For privilege of quoting from "Treacherous Ground," "The Great Hunger," I thank the author, Mr. Johan Bojer, and his American publishers, Moffatt, Yard

and Company of New York. For permission to quote from "The Glass of Fashion" I thank the publishers, who are the G. P. Putnam's Sons of New York. For permission to quote from "Modern Tendencies in Sculpture" I thank my friend, Lorado Taft, and his publishers, the Chicago University Press.

In the last chapters of this book I have given the names of five hundred Narrative Poems, Short Poems, Books of Fiction, Nature Books, Dramas, Books on the Great Hymns, as suggestive material for use in the book sermon. I have used every one of these books myself at some time and commend them to the preacher who is trying to introduce a new homiletic method into his preaching in order that he may shoot into his sermons the everlasting spice of vitalic variety!

In this chapter I have suggested the book, or poem; the name of the author and in every case where it has been possible the name of the publisher.

WILLIAM L. STIDGER.

BOOKS! BOOKS! BOOKS!

Books! Books! Books!
And we thank Thee, God
For the gift of them;
For the glorious reach
And the lift of them;
  For the gleam in them
  And the dream in them;
For the things they teach
And the souls they reach!
  For the maze of them
  And the blaze of them;
For the ways they open to us
And the rays that they shoot through us!

Books! Books! Books!
And we thank Thee, God,
For the light in them;
For the might in them;
  For the urge in them;
  And the surge in them;
For the souls they wake
And the paths they break;
  For the gong in them
  And the song in them;
For the throngs of folk they bring to us
And the songs of hope they sing to us!

Books! Books! Books!
And we thank Thee, God,
  For the deep in them;
  For the rhythmic swing
  And sweep in them;

For the croon in them
And the boon in them;
  For the prayers they pray
  And the doubt they slay;
For the DO in them
And the true in them;
  For the blue skies they bring to us
  And the new stars that they strew us.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
	INTRODUCTION BY BISHOP EDWIN HOLT HUGHES	vii
	FOREWORD	xi
	PART ONE: THERE ARE SERMONS IN POETRY	
CHAPTER		
I	*The Shoes of Happiness*—EDWIN MARKHAM	25
II	*How the Great Guest Came*—EDWIN MARKHAM	34
III	*The Juggler of Touraine*—EDWIN MARKHAM	51
	PART TWO: THERE ARE SERMONS IN FICTION	
IV	*Beggars' Gold*—ERNEST POOLE .	67
V	*The Truce of God*—MARY ROBERTS RINEHART	83
VI	*The Resurrection*—LEO TOLSTOY .	93
VII	*The Great Hunger*—JOHAN BOJER	108

CHAPTER PAGE

VIII *Treacherous Ground*—JOHAN BOJER 131

IX *The Passion for Life*—JOSEPH HOCKING 156

PART THREE: THERE ARE SERMONS IN NON-FICTION LITERATURE

X *Modern Tendencies in Sculpture*—LORADO TAFT 181

XI *The Glass of Fashion*—BY A GENTLEMAN WITH A DUSTER . . 192

PART FOUR: HELPFUL SERMON OUTLINES

XII FIVE HUNDRED SUGGESTIONS FOR BOOK SERMONS 205

PART ONE: THERE ARE SERMONS IN POETRY

THERE ARE SERMONS IN BOOKS

Chapter I

The Shoes of Happiness

EDWIN MARKHAM

Text: *Matthew* 10-10: "Get you no gold or silver nor brass in your purses; no wallet for your journey, neither two coats, nor shoes, nor staff."

THE STORY OF THE SEARCH FOR SPIRITUAL HAPPINESS IN THE WORLD

Edwin Markham, in "The Shoes of Happiness," has set forth the gospel of Jesus as stated in the text.

Jesus Himself set forth and had not "where to lay His head." He sent his disciples forth in the same spirit to preach the gospel of eternal happiness to mankind.

He wanted to teach the world that happiness did not consist in things but in a contented soul.

Markham takes the lowliest of wearing apparel and preaches this great, good gospel of good news to the world. He makes shoes golden.

He makes shoes; just common old shoes glitter with diamonds. He makes all shoes, be they heavy hobnailed shoes of the peasant; bejeweled shoes of the lady of wealth; be they shoes of the oriental called sandals; or shoes worn and tattered; shoes run down at the heel; man-shoes or baby-shoes upon which the tears of a mother falls in memory; shoes, shoes, shoes that tramp over rough ways or over carpets of velvet; shoes that trod the trails of life; or shoes that bury themselves in the moss of soft embraces; all shoes Markham makes to be "The Shoes of Happiness."

The sultan is sick.

Everything is brought to his bedside to make him well but all things fail.

Then comes a woman from the sultan's harem who tells how to cure the great sultan:

"I lift from the palace the darkening shroud.
O Mahamoud the Mighty, may Allah exalt,
And send only friends to eat your salt!
O Mahamoud, rummage the east and west
For the shoes of a mortal wholly blest;
For only by this can you break the ban:
You must wear the shoes of a happy man."

"Then shouted the sultan, 'Ho, Vizier,
I need those shoes: let the shoes be here!'
Then his voice ran low—so a beast grows still
As he stiffens his cords for the leap to kill—
'Go forth, Vizier, when the dawn is red,

And bring me the shoes; or send, instead,
By the hand of this trusted slave, your head!"

One would say that that was considerable of an impetus to a thorough search on the part of the poor vizier. One would say that he might be expected to employ his time well on that particular day. One would have a right to assume that he didn't consider union hours on that particular task; and that with the delightful prospects in mind of losing his head if he didn't "deliver the goods" by night; that he even resigned his union card in order to work more than eight hours.

Woodbine Willy says: "You cannot build a democracy on men who are forever thinking of their rights and never of their responsibilities."

It would be a safe assumption that the vizier on this particular day was not standing on street corners doing much talking about his right to an eight-hour day. He kept right busy every hour that day. He was thinking more about his responsibilities than he was about his rights; more about saving his head than he was about working a set number of hours.

He Went to the Rich

Perhaps quite naturally he expected to find the shoes in the home of the rich and he warned those who were with him:

"Keep your eyes alert, for the shoes should be
Well peppered with pearls for a sultan's eye:
So now to the rich where the joy runs high!"

They hadn't gone far when they saw a group of richly dressed folks out for a walk in the morning air. He ran to them and hailed them:

"So the vizier cried and his words were brief,
How many are here with never a grief?"

Much to his surprise he found that the rich were not happy:

"Alas! but the thorn pricks ever the rose,
And they all were pricked by wants and woes.
In each glad heart was a wistful cry;
Behind each joy was a secret sigh."

He Went to the Poor

Finding that happiness was not to be discovered among the wealthy he naturally turned to the poor.

He found a poor man with seven sweet children and he naturally assumed that here was his happy man. He called to him and asked the great question that all humanity has, for all ages, been asking itself; and he heard this answer:

" 'Ah, Vizier,
I have seven sweet joys, but I have one fear:
The dread of to-morrow is always here.

When my hand has work, then the mouths are fed;
When the work staff breaks, then I wish me dead.' "

Then He Went to a Poet

Surely those in life who are forever singing songs; those who are forever weaving verses for us; those who seek deep into the realities of life and love; the poets; these must surely wear the "happy shoes." So the vizier went to the poet:

"Over his shoulder the vizier peered.
'Tis a happy song, by the Prophet's beard!
Tell me, rimer, and quick with the word,
Are you not glad as a mated bird?'

Then answered the poet:

" 'No,' sighed the poet; 'you do me wrong,
For sorrow is ever the nest of song.
Out of the grieving the poet sings:
The rock is cleft, and the bright well springs.' "

Then He Went to Age and Youth

Yes, Youth would wear the shoes of happiness; and if not Youth then surely Age must be wearing them. Youth, which had so much to look forward to; Youth before whom stretched all life; Youth who walked in the dewy dawn of the morning of life. And if not Youth; then Age which sat in that quiet philosophic chair at

the sunset time of life; Age that could look with indifference on the impetuous dreams of Youth; Age that could be calm where Youth was torn with turbulence; Age that could, with benign dignity look back upon life and look forward into the adventure of to-morrow. Yes, from one of these surely he would find the secret of happiness:

"But each had his sorrow, his folly, his fear.
There was ever the shrug and ever the nay:
The young were restless that youth should stay,
The old were sad that it went away."

Then He Went to Love

If not Youth and Age; then surely young Love would be wearing these precious shoes for the sultan's curing. If ever there was a carefree time; if ever there was a moment of sublime, and unalloyed happiness, surely it was at that time when young love struck its harmony on the harp of life. He called:

" 'Ho, lover! Look from your sweet employ:
Is there any grief in your house of joy?' "

Then came the answer to his question:

" 'Yes, yes; for love is a tower of fears,
A joy, half torment, a heaven half tears.' "

Then He Went to the Merchant

In life we often look upon the merchant with his many wares, his fleets of ships at sea; his

standing in the community; his power and influence and think that his is the supreme height of happiness. In a modern city or community we often see the merchant class controlling the happenings of a town or city and feel that theirs is a path of complete comfort of soul, but we are reminded by the poet that happiness does not consist in things:

"But Hassan the merchant opened his lips
Only to sigh for his sunken ships."

Then He Went to the Soldier

Here was romance in a profession. Here was the soldier who traveled far lands; who wore the bright uniform; who was honored and crowned with the crown of victory; who marched through the streets leading his captives at the ends of golden chains; who heard the shouts of the multitudes acclaiming him hero. This man must surely wear the happy shoes:

"But ah, at a thought their eyes would fill
For comrades left on the battle hill."

Then He Went to the Wise Man

Here was a man who had been to Mecca and was all wise. He had learned much; he had traveled far; he was honored among his kind as few were honored. Those of us who have been in the

Orient remember this man who had been to Mecca. We remember the fez he wore; the honor in which he was held in his village wherever that village happened to be in Mohammedan countries. Yes, at last, here, because of his great wisdom, was the happy man.

"But the pilgrim answered with star-still eyes:
'I am not glad; I am only wise.' "

So the vizier's heart sank. He was utterly discouraged. He could not find that man who was wearing the happy shoes. The sultan would take his poor head.

He turned homeward with heavy heart:

"But as he came, with grim regrets
To the home sky, speared with the minarets,
And, as, one by one, on the purple rim
The domes of the city began to swim,
Hark! suddenly over the hush of morn
Came a fluting sound from a field of corn,
Where a man stretched out, with his arm for a pillow
Blew thin, sweet sounds from a pipe of willow."

" 'Ho!' cried Halil, 'I am seeking one
Whose days are all in a brightness run.'
'Then I am he, for I have no lands,
Nor have any gold to crook my hands.
Favor, nor fortune nor fame have I,
And I only ask for a road and sky—

These and a pipe of the willow-tree
To whisper the music out of me.' "

"Out into the field the vizier ran.
'Allah-il-Allah! but you are the man;
Your shoes, then, quick, for the great sultan—
Quick, and all fortunes are yours to choose!'

'Yes, mighty Vizier . . . but I have no shoes!' "

And so we find it with life; and so teaches the gospel of the lowly Christ; He who had not where to lay His sacred Head; He who spoke of the birds which had nests and the foxes which had holes but of the "Son of Man which had not where to lay His head."

That happiness is not found in "things" comes to us again in this great poem; comes to us with renewed emphasis over and over.

Chapter II

How the Great Guest Came

EDWIN MARKHAM

Text: *Matthew* 25-40. "And the King answered and said, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these, my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me."

THE BOOK SERMON OF SERVICE AS THE ESSENCE OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST.

"I am truly a preacher at the heart of me," said Edwin Markham one day as we sat on his porch looking out across the world and eternity.

"There is no greater thing than preaching through poetry," I added.

"I believe you!" responded the gray haired prophet and poet, impressively.

"Shelley says that 'The poets are the trumpets that sing to battle; the poets are the acknowledged legislators of the world.' And when he said that he might have added: 'And the poets are the prophets and preachers of the spiritual truths of life,' " I made haste to add to the conversation.

And so it is, that Edwin Markham is not only a great poet but he is a great prophet and preacher. I believe that I could easily defend a thesis that Edwin Markham is poet, prophet, and preacher. I would need but refer to any of his singing lyrics to substantiate the first statement; to his great poem "The Man With the Hoe" to substantiate the second statement; and to his short narrative poem "How The Great Guest Came" to substantiate my third thesis. It is with this great preaching poem that we are concerned in this book sermon.

I have had a fancy to call this sermon "Conrad The Cobbler" because it brings it closer home to us common folks of life. It is not the story of how some king or some wise man of old found the Christ, but the story of how a common every-day man of our own walks of life found the great guest. It is the story of a simple, trusting, faith-loving old Cobbler of shoes whose name was Conrad; how Christ came to his lowly door to visit him; and of how Christ will come to our lowly doors to visit us if we fulfill the conditions set forth in the eternal book of God's good news, such as is expressed in the text that we have selected for this chapter-sermon.

So Edwin Markham says by way of introduction:

"Before the Cathedral in grandeur rose
At Ingleburg where the Danube goes;
Before its forest of silver spires
Went airily up to the clouds and fires;
Before the Oak had ready a beam,
While yet the arch was stone and dream—
There where the altar was later laid,
Conrad the Cobbler plied his trade."

And Conrad the Cobbler believed in being a good cobbler even if he was only a cobbler. I have heard of men who might well profit by Conrad's wise example. I have heard of a clerk who loafed on his job, and this same clerk pestered the life out of me, taking my valuable time, telling me his tale of woe, which was, that he did not like being a clerk and he "wasn't going to do any more work than he could get by with"; that when he got to be a manager in that store he would "show them what work was; for a man could work when he was at something that he liked."

And I have heard of a boy who had a job as an office boy, and who had dreams of being a great lawyer in that same office some day, but who said to himself "I hate this business of being an office boy, so I shall not work at it very hard, but when I get to being a lawyer I'll work like a fiend!"

And I have heard of a young college graduate who started out to get a newspaper job, and they

put him at once on what is called "cub" work, but he was a college graduate and he had an idea that he ought to be given a more dignified job than that; for verily was he not a graduate of Harvard; and so this young man said unto himself "I'll show them that I'm too big a man to work at this cheap job; but when I get to 'star' work—interviewing the king of England, or at writing up the big things, I'll show them how well I can do it."

Nor do I need to tell you that these three miserably wrong men were never anything else than office boys, and clerks and cub reporters all their lives.

But Conrad the Cobbler was different from this. Here is the way he put it himself through our beloved Markham:

"Whether 'tis hidden or whether it show,
Let the work be sound, for the Lord will know!"

And we place Conrad the Cobbler alongside of his more illustrious brother, Phidias the sculptor, who said a like thing:

"Once Phidias stood, with hammer in his hand,
Carving Athene from the breathing stone,
Tracing with love the winding of a hair,
A single hair upon her head, whereon
A youth of Athens cried, 'Oh Phidias,
Why do you dally on a hidden hair?

When she is lifted to the lofty front
Of the Parthenon, no human eye will see!'
And Phidias thundered on him: 'Silence slave:
Men will not see, but the Immortals will!' "

And so Conrad the Cobbler and Phidias the greatest sculptor of all time were one in their greatness of soul. And herein Conrad the Cobbler, by his integrity to duty, no matter how humble that duty is, lifts himself from his lowly task to a seat beside Phidias the great. And so any one of us who, having a task to do, no matter how humble that task may be or seem—and who knows save God what the great tasks are and what the small tasks are?—that one who does his seemingly humble task well; that one who believes and knows that the eye of God and of the gods sees and knows how well we do our work—that one lifts himself into the very presence of God!

"He knows, He knows how true we play the game
of life!"

* * * * *

"Whether 'tis hidden or whether it show,
Let the work be sound, for the Lord will know!"

And therein lies the first lesson that Conrad the Cobbler teaches us.

The Lowly Cobbler and the Lowly Christ

Markham's description of the Cobbler is good. He was thin of hair; bald in fact; and his eyes peered out as though looking beyond mortal things:

> "As one who is done with fear
> Knowing at last that God is near."

Two neighbors called on Conrad the Cobbler one morning and they found a strange sight within the humble shop. It was covered with a hundred boughs of green. The neighbors looked surprised, and then Conrad the Cobbler told them that that morning at dawn he had had a dream even as the cocks were crowing to scare the night away; and in that dream God had told him that He was coming to be his guest.

And so Conrad had twined the holly, had washed the walls of his humble shop and had covered everything with branches of fir to welcome his heavenly guest.

"And He comes to-day, the table is spread,
With milk and honey and wheaten bread!"

"Then his friends went home and his face grew
still
As he watched for the shadow across the sill."

And as he watched, he lived over and over how he would speak—what he would say—what he would do when that great guest came at last across his lowly door.

I think he would be wonder-eyed if that guest came. I remember a picture that I saw at the Metropolitan and it was called "CHRIST AMONG THE LOWLY." I have never forgotten it, especially the look in the eyes of the folks therein: the father and the peasant mother and the little children and the neighbors who crowded the door to see this great guest. This look that I speak of was a radiant look that made these peasant folk seem high and holy. It gave them a touch of the divine that is in all men. It crowned them with a halo of light. It regenerated them. It lifted their bended backs and their broken spirits up to the kinghood that God meant for them in the beginning. It broadened the brow of them. It glorified the spirit of them. In this picture was Markham's own "Man With the Hoe" made a king; and this lowly peasant hut made a palace when Jesus entered there.

The Glory of Great Expectations

And so I imagine that Conrad the Cobbler must have looked even as he sat awaiting the coming of his great guest. Even at the very thought of that eternal presence, I believe that the Cobbler's

face took on that same radiance which made him king of men; prince of workmen; and even again he was lifted up to Phidias' height because he EXPECTED God.

Glory to the man who expects great things; for he shall have them.

Glory to the Man who dreams great dreams; for he shall find them come true.

Glory to the man who hopes great hopes; for he shall find them some day fulfilled.

Glory to the man who expects eternity; for verily he shall find eternity everywhere; in his heart; in the hearts of his friends, in earth and beyond the earth.

Glory to the man who expects God to come into his heart and into his house as his guest; for verily it is promised that God will come.

And so Conrad the Cobbler had the great glory of expecting God every minute.

Glory to the man who expects to find honest people in this old world; for verily he shall find them.

Glory to the man who expects to find love; for verily he shall find that same thing in abundance.

Glory to the man who expects the Son of God; for Jesus is standing always just outside the half opened door; eagerly awaiting that invitation to come in.

And so Conrad the Cobbler EXPECTED his guest.

And as he waited how filled with wonder, and laughter; high and holy laughter; with love, and tears and tremblings his old bended body was. And how full of heavenly sunlight his face; and how full of song his heart! I can see his face tonight as I sit in the light of a dying sun. I almost feel as though I were gloriously waiting the "Guest" myself, it is so real, and as I sit, that sweet word of Riley's comes drifting out of the west:

When She Comes Home

"When she comes home again! a thousand ways
I fashion to myself, the tenderness
Of my glad welcome: I shall tremble—yes;
And touch her, as when first in the old days
I touched her girlish hand, nor dared upraise
Mine eyes, such was my faint heart's sweet distress.
Then silence: And the perfume of her dress:

The room will sway a little and a haze
Cloy eyesight—soulsight, even—for a space:
And tears—yes; and the ache here in the throat,
To know that I so ill deserve the place
Her arms make for me; and the sobbing note
I stay with kisses, ere the tearful face
Again is hidden in the old embrace!"

And so Conrad must have felt as he sat waiting the coming of his guest.

And how glorious it is to wait the coming of one beloved!

I know what it means to wait for the coming of baby arms that you have loved and have had to do without for a time. Then the glad news comes that she is coming back to you with the mother that bore her, and how anxiously you watch the coming of that trans-continental train from its far eastern starting place. You, yourself, have traveled over every inch of that way a thousand times during those four days they are on the way. How eagerly and anxiously you have scanned the papers for fear something has happened to that precious train. You never knew before what an important person an engineer is. He became a king then and his was a high and holy trust; that of being an engineer. Then the day that they came; the waiting during that long extra hour that the train was late; the walking up and down on the platform; the peering through the long

gray dusk down the track; the sitting and trying to think how they both will look; the wondering how they will act and what they will say; the wondering if that little mind will have grown so fast that you will not know her; the wondering if those baby lips will have some new sweet word to thrill your soul to tears; the wondering if that little smile will be the same, and if those baby arms, burned and brown and chubby, will have forgotten their cunning way of stealing about your neck—and the wondering if that other girl, that older girl—that woman-girl like unto whom that child-girl looks; from whence she came in God's good way and day; the wondering how she will look; and what she will say, and the trying to picture the brown eyes of her. Then suddenly you will find that the way the older girl, the mother-girl looked so many years ago will insist upon slipping into the picture as you wait; and you will see her as she was that June night on the college campus; and then on the river under the moonlight with her hair blowing and her white dress; and then you will see her in a church. And so you wonder as you wait for those you love to come again.

And so Conrad the Cobbler waited for his guest:

And it was a beautiful waiting.

"He would wash the feet where the spikes had
been;
He would kiss the hands where the nails went in;
And then at last would sit with Him
And break the bread as the day grew dim."

Yes, it was a beautiful waiting.

And Oh, how many forgotten courtesies, how many unremembered things, how many sweet kindnesses you dreamed you would pay them when they came back to you again; these loved ones who had been away. You would not forget the gifts of roses, and lilies of the valley that the older girl so loved—nor the toys, the sweets, the kisses that the little girl so loved. You might have been careless once on a time but never more!

Yes, it was a beautiful waiting.

Then Came These Little Ones

But as the Cobbler mused, suddenly in the midst of his dream there passed:

"A beggar drenched by the driving rain."

And, his heart, deeply touched:

"He called him in from the stony street
And gave him shoes for his bruised feet!"

And then when the beggar went, suddenly the Cobbler's window was darkened again and when

he looked up he found that it was an old crone, a weary woman; a woman of the streets; not a beautiful creature by any means; no color of rose in her cheeks; no sparkle to her eyes; no dance in her feet and legs; nothing but an ugly old crone.

"Her face with wrinkles and sorrow sown."

And she carried a bundle of fagots on her back.

Conrad the Cobbler remembered how his Savior had treated the woman taken in adultery and ran out to her and lifted her load of fagots from her weary shoulders:

"He gave her his loaf and steadied her load
As she took her way on the weary road."

"Then to his door came a little child
Lost and afraid in the world so wild."

So catching that little child up; lost and afraid as it was; he comforted it, and gave to it the milk in the cup that he had been keeping for his great guest who was coming.

He led the child home; dreading even as he left his shop for a few moments that his great heavenly guest would come in his absence; yet feeling the pressing necessity of this kindly and kingly duty.

He lifted this little child as another man long ago lifted a little child to His breast, breathing

his Savior's words over again, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

And so he lifted this little child up, and took it to its mother even though he ran the risk of missing his guest for whom he had prepared so carefully after his dream!

Then he came home and waited for Christ to come. He waited long. The shadows of evening fell. Perhaps the guest had come while he was away with the child?

"The day went down in the crimson west
And with it the hope of the blessed Guest,
And Conrad sighed as the world turned gray:
'Why is it Lord that your feet delay?
Did you forget that this was the day?'
Then soft in the silence a voice he heard:
'Lift up your heart for I kept my word.
Three times I came to your friendly door;
Three times my shadow was on your floor.
I was the beggar with bruised feet;
I was the woman you gave to eat;
I was the child on the homeless street!"

The Hindered Guest

So we learn that Christ has more ways than one of coming into our homes and hearts. Sometimes He comes in the form of a needy child; sometimes in the shape of an ugly old crone of the streets who needs our help; sometimes as a beggar

at our doors. Christ has His way of doing things and often these ways test the very virtue of our Christhood.

In another striking Markham poem this preacher poet teaches this same tremendous truth in a little different way.

This poem is called "The Hindered Guest." It is the negative of Conrad's experience and I set it forth here to show what may happen when we do not respond to these visits of Christ through the needs of his "little ones."

Friar Hilary was a learned man. He knew all of the chants by heart. He knew the logic of the text books. He knew the controversies of Jerome and Tertullian's works complete.

He had built himself a tower of stone and lived in it all alone, calling to God continuously with psalm and prayer, inviting God to come as his guest in his narrow monk's cell.

"One bleak December he fasted sore,
That Christ might knock at his low door—
Lord Jesus shine across the floor,
For he was hungry to be fed
With the holy love, with the mystic bread."

Yet, as the poet says, Christ did not come to sup with him in spite of his great wisdom and in spite of his fasting and in spite of his much praying.

" 'Where art Thou?' he would cry, and hark!
Wild answers echoed in the dark."

Then suddenly he heard a cry of distress, as of a mortal about to die. Up he sprang from his couch and ran out into the night.

He found a stricken man, and, lifting him to his broad shoulders, he carried him up the steep stairs to his cell.

"He washed the feet and stroked the hair,
And for the once forgot his prayer.
He gave him wine that the Pope had sent
For some great day of the Sacrament;
And, looking up, behold, at his side
Was bending also, the Crucified!"

It is a beautiful story of service. "Unto the least of one of these my little ones" keeps echoing in our hearts as we read it. It is one great sermon on service that we read here.

"How The Great Guest Came" links up the man who instinctively does Christ's service with "The Hindered Guest" who delayed the coming of Christ because he thought that true worship consisted in reading psalms and making long prayers.

This is not Christ's way to worship. It is not even the way that He wishes to be worshiped by His own. He wants His worship to find expression in service to His little ones:

"And then the Master said: 'My son,
My children on My errands run:
And when you flung the psalter by
And hurried to a brother's cry
You turned at last your rusty key,
And left the door ajar for Me!' "

Chapter III

The Juggler of Touraine

EDWIN MARKHAM

Text: *Proverbs* 18-12. "Before honor goeth humility." *Acts* 3-6. "Silver and gold have I none but such as I have give I unto Thee."

THE BOOK SERMON OF THE GLORY OF HUMILITY IN WORSHIP

The Juggler of Touraine

With the scripture verse that I have here quoted, "Before honor goeth humility," I am also using for my setting of this hour's sermon Edwin Markham's sweetly human poem "The Juggler of Touraine."

Barnabas was the Juggler's name and he went about the world juggling his balls in the air on "Festival Days."

"He would startle the Square on festival days
When all of the town was a sudden blaze——"

When "sailors and thieves, mayor and marshal, shepherds and damsels, beggars and troopers,

ladies and monks, bullies and quacks, brigands and hucksters, gaffers and gamesters, were making merry in holiday," into this throng would the juggler come:

"In through it all, like a straddling ape,
The juggler strode, with the town agape."

With his punchinello on tipsy stilts, his "peaked hat, half yellow, half red, his powdered face, his puffed out gown sprinkled with signs of the zodiac, his sleeves blown up like young balloons."

And Markham tells us in beautiful verse that even the wealthy ladies on their way to mass stopped to watch this clever but humble juggler.

And how many remarkable things he could do:

"Now he poised on hands on a rolling sphere,
And cracked his heels at the marshal's ear,
Now he scattered nine balls to the morning air
And he kept them a-shine and a-weaving there—"

Or:

"He swallowed the notary's signet-ring,
And down in your pocket you found the thing—"

And he kept up his tricks:

"Till a shower of coins on the carpet fell,
Like a rain of leaves on an autumn well."

And then comes winter and Barnabas, who has spent his summer in the joy of making people happy, and making them forget their troubles in laughter, finds himself a juggler, lean of purse and empty of stomach; not having even the snug abode of the squirrel and the lizard and the other things of the wild.

But:

"He only smiled on the old world still
Wide was his love as the sun's good will."

Through all of the ways of the world this Barnabas the Juggler:

"Kept the ways of a little child."

But one evening as Barnabas the Juggler was hugging his knives and balls finding a bed in the cattle stalls, he fell in with a friar who took pity on him and invited him to take shelter in the cloister for the night.

Here Barnabas, who was always a serious minded man, caught the spirit of worship and had a great desire to express himself to the Holy Mother in a fit manner. But as he watched the others singing and chanting the lady's praise he felt indeed that his was a poor offering that he made, his was indeed a pitiably poor offering. It made him weep! It broke his heart to think how

poor it was, especially in the light of the skill of the others in the cloister:

"There was the almoner who could worship the
Virgin in lovely words
That went to the heart like a flight of birds:
She was the Lily, the Tower of Gold,
Gate of Ivory, Roof of the Fold,
The Rock of Vision, the Well that Flows,
The Star of the Sea, the Mystic Rose."

How eloquently and beautifully he could chant the praise of the Holy Mother, but how feebly and poorly fell the words of the poor juggler.

"And there was the good friar Estevan,
A little mysterious thread of a man
Who lauded her grace in Virgilian verse,
In numbers majestic, tender and terse."

But how awkwardly stumbled out the broken sentences of the poor Juggler of Touraine; how feebly he expressed the great love in his heart. Indeed he hardly dared speak a word even in his private prayers.

Then there was Friar Glorian who was a beautiful penman and:

"Copied the stately chants,
With all of his scholarly curves and slants."

But the poor juggler could not even write his own name.

Bonaccord, Basil and Theophile:

"Praised her in music, as others kneel."

One with the 'cello, one with the violin and one with the horn. But the poor juggler knew in his heart that a sorry music he would make, as much as there was of music in his heart. Then he wept alone.

Also, there was Friar Julian who painted madonnas to honor the Lady Beautiful in his worship, but blundering awkward Barnabas could not even paint a tree.

Then there was Friar Palemone who

"Chiseled and hammered the patient stone"

and carved wonderful statues to honor and worship the Holy Mother.

But poor Barnabas

"Nothing of these could he do, alas!"

And Barnabas would not be comforted because he could not worship and praise. He felt like an outcast and a burden. He grew thin worrying about it.

Then the old friar, the prior, to comfort him told him the story of a friar from a southern isle,

who could only recite half an ave and "that half right." Yet over whose soul went "beautiful tremblings" his love was so sincere, and that when this humble friar died out of his bosom sprang four doves, white and pure, which flew to the wood and sang:

"The four white doves that so lightly came
Were the four white letters of Mary's name!"

"But the Friar's story was little relief
To Barnabas, bearing his daily grief."

Barnabas Worshiped the Best He Could

So one morning he slipped to the secret prayer room and kneeling there alone he prayed:

" 'O Madam and Mother, O Virgin Bride,
Here am I only a tethered ox,
Eating the grass of the useful flocks!' "

And then with humility he recited the varying gifts of the others ending with this pathetic word:

" 'But I, poor Barnabas, nothing can I,
But drone in the sun as a drowsy fly.' "

And so it went, Barnabas grieving all the weeks and months, grieving that he could not adequately laud the Holy Mother. But:

"The days crept on till a white dawn came
When a thought flashed over his soul like flame."

And he leapt to his legs and shot his way to the chapel. The other friars followed the juggler until they found him muttering before the altars this prayer:

" 'All that I am, Madam, all is thine!
Again I am come with spangle and ball
To lay at your altar my little, my all!' "

The Lowly Deed Is the Lofty Test

And there in that sacred chapel, to the utter chagrin of the other friars he worshiped, lying on his back, juggling his balls in the air, trying his tricks, all to please the Virgin Mother. He walked on his hands, and cried out:

" 'Lady,' he cries again, 'Look, I entreat:
I worship with fingers and body and feet!' "

The friars shouted out that this was a scandal and a shame; that nothing like this had ever been done in that sacred place before.

This is frequently the way of a certain type of institutionalized church-man. They have a set way to worship and if you do not worship that set way, you are wrong. This narrow-minded limitation of worship has set the church back several centuries. Controversies over whether a man or woman shall be immersed, or baptized by sprinkling and kindred controversies have no

place in real heart-worship. This great poem makes that clear.

But suddenly the elders began to quake for down from the rafters came the Lady of beauty, lightly bending over Barnabas:

"And wipes the dew from his shining face;
Then touching his hair with a look of light,
Passes again from the mortal sight!
An odor of lilies hallows the air,
And sounds as of harpings are everywhere.

" 'Ah,' cried the elders, beating the breast,
'So the lowly deed is the lofty test
And whatsoever is done from the heart to Him
Is done from the height of the Seraphim!' "

And thus it was that the Juggler of Touraine, Barnabas, though he could speak no eloquent words, though he could sing no high sounding chants, though he could not make music on the 'cello or the violin to melt the heart to tears, though he could not paint Sistine Madonnas, though he could not carve magnificent statuary from cold and patient marble, though he could not pen with exquisite skill the songs and chants; he worshiped in his own simple, sincere way and above them all won the word and the touch and the presence of the Virgin Mother.

"So the lowly deed is the lofty test!"

The Lowly Deeds of Lowly Life

And so I speak this hour to many a Barnabas—to many a man and woman who would that they could speak with tongues of men and angels, but know that they cannot; who would that they could express their love and reverence in beautiful language but know that they cannot; who may be comforted by this beautiful tale, which has many parallels in our Book of Books. I am reminded even as I speak that there was a widow once whose mite was considered of more value than the riches of the wealthy. I am reminded of a rich young man who was told to go and sell that which he had and give to the poor in order that he might have right to the kingdom. I am reminded of a phrase, "Silver and gold have I none but such as I have I give unto Thee." I am reminded of a thousand admonitions in the old and the new Testaments that men must worship not with words but with the love of their hearts.

I suppose that there are many Mothers. In fact I know some who worship the great Mother and the great Father as they button little shoes, and wash little dresses, and mend little stockings, and wipe away little tears and kiss hurt places well.

I remember Father Staly, the old white-haired blacksmith down in West Virginia who never did

learn to write his own name, who never could read a book; but who could kneel in a place of prayer, or beside a dying man or woman, or beside a penitent sinner and somehow bring the heavens down with fire and love; who could get in touch with heavenly things quicker than any man I ever knew and yet his words were so full of blunders and grammatical errors that if they were not so filled with a holy wonder and love, one would have laughed at his grammatical stumblings. Yet he brought the fire of God down very close to earth!

Many times; more often than otherwise; I have a feeling that my way of worshiping, my feeble words, my stumbling eloquence, but dumbly tells the tale of worship that I would have it tell the wonderful Christ man. How many, many times as I look into the faces of men and women who need Christ, and into the problems of a tired world that is dying for lack of His love do I feel my inadequacy in the face of need. Yet I remember Barnabas, and I know that if I love with all my heart and tell with sincerity Christ's story of love and sacrifice, it will find a man's heart!

And some of you, my own folks, have tried to speak your public word, acknowledging your Christianity in public meetings; some of you have tried to pray in public and you have sat down embarrassed and stammering. You have

flushed with chagrin, but most likely your heart-felt word got nearer to the throne of God than the words of your more eloquent brother for whom it was no task to speak and pray in public.

And maybe you too have felt that you ought to speak a word of comfort to some weary soul and you have hesitated because you have felt that your words would be too feeble and too awkward, but now that you have heard the story of Barnabas you have learned that there is only one requisite and that is that the words you speak come from your heart of hearts and they will find their way home as surely as birds come home at night to rest.

They called you in, to tell a poor weary boy that he was to die in an hour? You wondered all the way down the street into the setting sun what you would say? You went with fear and trembling to tell that nineteen year old boy that the doctors had doomed him to die. You had never done that hard thing before? Yet you are a Christian and men and women want a Christian word when they face eternity. You went into that house and the mother with broken heart and tear-stained face followed you into that room to hear you tell her boy that he must die; a task that her own heart could not undertake. You sat beside his bed, still trembling with fear. You knew no set way to tell such

news. You felt so inadequate to the demand. Your words seemed feeble as you tried to frame them. To tell a man that he is about to step into eternity is no small thing to do. But you just clasped his hands, perhaps a bit awkwardly; you looked into his half-bleared eyes; you hardly knew what you said, but, as you spoke, the eternal God seemed to be bending to listen. It was a beautiful scene; that which you thought would be so hard. Instead it turned out to be a glorious sunset to a young life. It was a glory that you never could forget. Your feeble words had come from your heart of love to glorify that tremendous hour!

And so to the timid, and to the feeble, to the humble, those who lack eloquence, to those who are poor, to those who are uneducated, to those who do not have the gift of tongues, to those who pray in awkward phrases, to those who have but little talent in worship, I say again,

"Before honor goeth humility."

Go humbly and sincerely to the Father's throne and he will bend down from the very skies to crown thee. Though you be Barnabas the Juggler and can but worship with balls and knives and sticks; though you walk to worship on your hands; though you grimace and grin in worship;

if you but do that humble deed honestly, God will hear and God will heed!

And may I close with the lines of another poet, Elnora D. Woods:

"In the long, low, eastern workroom
The weavers wove apace,
Each with a separate pattern,
Each in his own set place;
Threads of the sunset's splendor,
In their sinewy fingers whirled,
Under their hands triumphant
Grew the work of the world.

"Only one wrought in silence,
Only one head bent low—
The best and the blithest workman
Who had welcomed the morning glow;
But the threads in his hands had faded,
Tarnished the gold and green,
And the work that should have crowned him,
Fore-doomed, seemed poor and mean.

"Wondering the others watched him;
'Put by! Put by!' said they;
'You shame your skill by such labor;
Rest from the loom to-day.'
But he bent to his work in silence
Save when the whisper rose,
'Surely the Master set the task,
And surely the Master knows.'

"In bitter pain and heart-break
He wove till his work was done

And the Master of all the weavers
Came at the set of sun;
Then, as the others thronged him,
Showing their patterns rare,
The Master turned to him who failed
And laid a hand on his hair:

"'Well done! well done! my weaver,
And rich shall your guerdon be!
But of all these beautiful patterns
This one best pleaseth me;
For the red of courage and the gold of faith
Are woven whene'er a man
Looks in the face of failure
And does the best he can.'"

PART TWO: THERE ARE SERMONS IN FICTION

Chapter IV

Beggars' Gold

ERNEST POOLE

Text: *Hebrews* 13-2. "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

THE BOOK-SERMON STORY OF THOSE WHO SIT ON BAGS OF GOLD AND KNOW IT NOT

Beggars' Gold

We are all beggars sitting on bags of gold.

Life is like that. Human souls are like this legend.

The legend on which Ernest Poole's new novel is based is the legend of the Chinese beggar who had gathered up a lot of rocks and rubbish and had carried them in a bag on his shoulder until one day, weary and worn, he fell asleep.

A friend came along and awoke him. The beggar was discouraged. The friend said, "Look in your bag."

The beggar said, "It is not worth looking into. It is nothing but rubbish."

"It is not rubbish. The bag is full of gold," said the friend.

The beggar looked and sure enough his bag was full of gold.

In talking with young China in the shape of a class of Chinese students Katherine Blake, the heroine of the story, in trying to arouse that something within their hearts which she knew they had, said, "No matter how foolish Americans may laugh at you here, I hope that you will never forget to be proud of your country. China is poor — but China is rich — richer than the wildest dreams! You are beggars sitting on bags of gold!"

This is what Katherine Blake said to the little class of Chinese boys that she was teaching in New York City. She herself had been born in China, for her Scotch father was an engineer who helped to open China. Both of them loved China and Katherine hoped to go back some day. That was the great dream of her girl life.

This is the text that Ernest Poole takes to teach the great sermon of his fascinating book.

The text that I take from the Bible is "For many have entertained angels unawares!"

In fact most of us do this all the time, for we have powers within us and about us; friends, and ambitions, and inspirations; whether we know it

or not; and these things make us beggars sitting on bags of gold.

One poet has summed it up in four lines:

" 'Open the gates good Saint!' they cried;
Pass deeper to your soul!
There is a spirit in your side
Which hell cannot control!"

There it is—all summed up in four lines. Indeed in one line:

"Pass deeper to your soul!"

Pass deeper into your soul and you will find power, and dreams, and vision and ambition and bags of gold that you know not of.

"The Vision of Sir Launfal" has the heart of the idea set forth in this book and the idea that I want to set forth in this sermon. The legend of Lowell shows Sir Launfal going out all over the world to search for the Holy Grail and at last finding it at his own gate in a kindly deed that he offered to a beggar. He searched the world over only to find that all of his life he had literally been a beggar sitting on a bag of gold that was at his own doorway.

"Acres of Diamonds," that great lecture by Russell Conwell, has the same idea beautifully set forth.

It is true with every human being, that every

day of his life he is entertaining angels unawares; that he is tramping past the Holy Grail at his own gate; that he is treading over soil filled with diamonds; that he is a beggar sitting on bags of gold; if he will only learn to "Pass deeper to his soul!"

Youth Is a Beggar Sitting on Bags of Gold

Youth has buried in his soul infinite possibilities for power and vision. He has dynamite in his eternal soul if he ever discovers it. Peter Wells, the young country boy in this book, found the gold of Youth in an odd way.

A missionary came to his little village to talk about China. The boy was fascinated. He had a dollar in his pocket and when the missionary made his plea the boy felt that he ought to give that dollar.

He didn't give it for selfish reasons, but that haunted him. He knew he was a great sinner. It is a humorous touch. He went home that night muttering to himself, "I guess I'm headed for hell all right!"

Then he began to ease his conscience by figuring out what a wonderful privilege that missionary had in getting to live in that wonderful China. Then he figured that, after all, he wasn't such a sinner for withholding the dollar. That night he awoke saying to himself,

"God ain't he lucky—takin' a great trip like that—seein' China—while we farm!"

That was the awakening of an ambition to see China in his boy soul. He was beginning to see the bags of gold on which he, Youth, sat. He was beginning to get the light of the world and its face in his dreams and his eyes. It is a great moment when this happens to youth and he begins to strike deeper into his soul!

Sometimes it takes an outsider to strike the pick of personality into the hillside of a boy's life until the springs of dream gush forth.

Some of us were fortunate enough to have a friend who did this in youth. God pity the boy who does not have some friend who awakens his dreams, who widens his horizons, who makes him see the world in his visions, who strikes the pick deep until the water gushes forth and makes youth know what is buried in its own soul.

What a beautiful privilege the parent, the preacher, the teacher, the lover, the friend, of youth has to do this high and holy thing.

Uncle Bill Gowdy, the Postmaster, did it for Peter. He got him to seeing the world. They collected postage stamps from all over the earth and they talked about far lands by the hour.

Uncle Bill got Peter to studying and reading about far reaches and strange countries until one

day Peter got to knowing that there were powers within him that he did not dream before. The book says of this great moment:

"Then there came intimations of thrilling powers within himself—deep, deep inside like buried springs!"

What a tremendous hour it is when youth realizes its power, its possibilities; when youth realizes that it is a beggar sitting on bags of gold.

Often the church is the arousing medium. When the church is working at white heat it ought always to be this medium. Sometimes it is a great book that is the arousing agency. Sometimes it is a sermon. Often—perhaps more often—it is a Christian friend who thrills and stirs these fires of vision and ambition—these energies of the soul.

No youth ought ever to be allowed to pass life's milestones without the realization that he is a beggar sitting on bags of gold.

Real Love Is a Beggar Sitting on Bags of Gold

Peter, aroused by his first ambitions of youth, and through the unselfish interest of Uncle Bill Gowdy soon found himself in New York; ready to breast the world.

Fortunately soon after arriving he met Katherine Blake.

She was teaching a class of Chinese lads.

He fell in love with her.

They open up their souls to each other and they discover that each has this love for, and this dream of some day going to China. She because of her father and he because of the missionary.

They have everything in common. Love soon grew high and white like snow-white peaks; and laid its foundations deep to unsounded depths.

When he found that he loved Katherine Blake:

"Something in him poured up like fire and light. Amid the narrow tenement streets he felt a new immensity!"

Let that last phrase thrill! "He felt a new immensity!"

The right kind of love does that for a man.

Spurious love does not.

The right kind of love pushes back the world's horizons for a man or a woman. Love brings a "New Immensity" into any life.

In other words the right kind of love makes a man or a woman know that, all along, they have been beggars sitting on bags of gold.

Peter walked home and as he walked he looked at his clothes. They were poor and shabby. Then he reached his cheap boarding house. It was as poor as his clothes. He realized that out-

side he looked like a boarding house but inside was the gold. He said to himself:

"I may look like a boarding house, but by God, I've got a China inside!"

Love was bringing new dreams, and new hopes, and awakening in him the finest and best thing of which he was capable.

Marriage Is a Beggar Sitting on Bags of Gold

Then came marriage and life with all of its disappointments. Peter had an ambition to write a book on Roosevelt. But he had to make a living also and this was hard. But the burning fire of ambition was at white heat. He even met Roosevelt personally. He worked for years on the book while he taught to make a living. That period of life was full of keen disappointments. They had to give up the dream to go to China.

Then came the baby. Kate started to work too early and sickness came that dragged her down into the shadow of death.

"It's nip and tuck—just touch and go," was the way Peter put it as he watched by her bedside day after day and night after night.

"Haggard, flushed, unconscious, rousing to delirium, seeing things he could not see, deep engrossed in a world of her own, muttering and

clenching her fists—this older, stronger, stranger woman, whom he did not know, doggedly fought to keep alive. And he could feel her winning. At last, one day she looked up at him, with tired, clear and smiling eyes."

" 'Well, dearie, here I am again!'

"Peter bent clumsily and took her hand and pressed it hungrily to his lips.

" 'Now stay here!' he said. 'Don't let's take any more fool chances! Just be quiet—for God's sake! Just—go to sleep!'

"Peter felt weary, beaten, broken, as though he had been through a mill.

" 'This is marriage and a baby!' he thought. 'Just the beginning! Now what next?' "

Peter did not know it at that time, but he was just beginning to find the bags of gold in married life; he was just beginning to know that in Kate he was entertaining one of God's angels unawares. So learn we all of us in some tragic, sacred moment of life.

The second thing that taught him that he was a beggar sitting on bags of gold in his married life was when he suddenly discovered what a wonderful creature his little nine year old girl was.

He had been so busy with trying to write his book and trying to make a living that he had lost his child. She had grown away from him.

Every parent to whom God has given children

is a beggar sitting on bags of gold if he neglects that child and fails to find the gold in its soul.

This was Peter's experience.

It is the experience of many of us.

Roosevelt was never too busy to play with his children. His letters to his children show that; letters written in the midst of the strenuous duties of the executive office of the greatest nation on earth; duties which were never so impelling as to make him neglect each golden bag that each of his children represented to this great soul.

A great American sculptor said to me last summer:

"I lost my first child."

I replied with a good deal of sympathy, "I am sorry. How did she die?"

"She didn't die. She got away from me. I was too busy!"

Then he told me about his fine comradeship with his second daughter; of what a joy it was to him; how she understood everything that he did and dreamed; a friendship like two boys. It was beautiful to hear him talk about it; and to see the fine light in his eyes. But his sentence, "I lost my first daughter," I have never forgotten.

We parents do that too often. We have bags of gold in each child and we live like beggars neglecting so great salvation; so great a possibility of love.

The third awakening experience that Peter had in married life which revealed to him its gold was when Katherine once again faced death. They had lived together now to middle life. They had quarreled; they had been disillusioned; they had hurt and hated. His book had gone by the boards. They had never gone to China. The dreams of life had been seemingly shattered one by one.

Little Moon Chao, whom they had taken into their home for years and whom they had, at last, seen go back to China, was the only way in which they had seen their dreams fulfilled, but that was a poor substitute.

They had what might be called rather an average married life. It was a constant struggle with all of the disillusionments incident to poverty and life in a city.

In each of their hearts they had about decided that their life together was a failure.

Then came another serious illness to Katherine.

"He went back and sat down by her bed. Her eyes were closed, but she knew that he was there. He noticed now the lines in her face. Kate was forty-seven years old, and her soft, fine hair was already turning gray. 'But she has always kept herself young,' he said determinedly. 'She's a fighter, and she wants to live!' In a moment her hand came out for his.

" 'I'm pretty sick, Peter,' she whispered. 'But don't worry. We'll get through this.'

" 'Yes.'

" 'Only don't go away. Keep hold of my hand. You give me so much more than you know.'

"Toward the middle of the night, after a long, fierce struggle for breath, she muttered, smiling:

" 'I can't stand many more like that.'

"Peter grew rigid, straining, as though all she were suffering had been gathered into himself.

" 'It won't last long. You must!' he said.

"An hour, and another passed. Between the battles that she fought, a gleaming light came in her eyes.

" 'I'm going somewhere, Peter!' Her whisper was so sharp and clear that he started forward in alarm. 'Back—back—back to the East! I have the strangest feeling! Keep hold of me! Remember, dear——'

"A strange thing happened to Peter that night —strange as the rising of the sun, mysterious as the break of day. He had lived with Kate nearly thirty years. In all that time, those thousands of days, in lives all filled with little things—worries, tangles, petty quarrels, disagreements, comforts, joys—their love, upon the surface, had seemed to grow dull, middle aged. But to-night he knew it had not been so. Beggars sitting on bags of gold. Down beneath their consciousness there had been lived two deeper lives—lives in which no memories were ever lost or cast aside, where all their struggles, hopes and dreams, bleak disappointments, sudden joys, lived on, piled up."

Life Is a Beggar Sitting on Bags of Gold and God

Peter found that youth was a beggar sitting on bags of gold; that love was the same; and best of all that marriage, from beginning to end, was that very thing. But the most important thing that he discovered was that life is so in regard to God.

We go along trying to find the Holy Grail. We search the world over for it and find it within our own souls. We go along hunting for "Acres of Diamonds" and after we search the world over we find those acres of jewels in our own children, our own friends, our own wives and our own home. We go along searching for happiness and soul-peace. We try everything once. They all fail. The one most apparent thing we nearly always fail to try — God and Jesus Christ. Spiritually we are all beggars sitting on bags of gold.

Moon Chao expressed it in a letter that he wrote back about his teacher in China:

"At last he taught us to open great windows! 'Look!' he cried. 'And we would see—far off to the western world—and far down into our own souls!' "

There is the secret. That teacher had taught Moon Chao to look deep into his own soul and we hear the echo of that other poet:

" 'Open the doors, good Saint!' they cried,
'Pass deeper to thy soul:
There is a spirit in your side
Which hell cannot control!' "

That spirit is God. The poet found it so. Ernest Poole in his great book finds it so; Moon Chao found it so; Peter found it so; we all find it so, for we all find that we are entertaining "Angels unawares"; and that we have in our own souls unsounded depths of spiritual power and peace.

Moon Chao was telling Peter and Katherine about his school, in China.

" 'And I,' he said, 'have seventy-three. But—oh why will you Americans always measure by numbers? My school is small—but it is as great as three small ships upon the ocean, bearing Columbus to a new world. It is as great as three little specks in the desert, bearing Wise Men from the East! It is great as the beginnings of a mighty new life, for four hundred millions of people!' he cried. With a low, clear, thrilling laugh, Kate said,

" 'How glad I am—how glad for you!' "

She had discovered that, through this boy, whom they had taken into their home, their great dream was being realized; their opportunity to serve China and to live through him for China's redemption. She was seeing that this Chinese

boy was all that she had said of the Chinese legend; he had been the bag of gold on which Peter and she had been sitting for so long; and not knowing. Thank God for that. They were finding their own souls through Moon Chao, who was unselfishly serving in China. They had truly been entertaining "Angels unawares" when they had taken the little, homeless Chinese boy into their home during the early hard days of their married life. They had found the Holy Grail in his life.

And, at last, even through the medium of Peter's greatest failure, the attempt to write his book on Roosevelt for boys, an undertaking which had gone down into the tragedy of disappointment, he had found God and knew it not that God was there all the time.

It was in this wise:

When Peter was writing his book he spent much time in the library.

He used to see a kindly, inquiring looking old man on Sunday afternoons. One day Peter spoke to him.

" 'Would you mind telling me,' said Peter, 'why you are so interested in so many kinds of books?' And with that whimsical, wistful look, the elderly man answered:

" 'I am trying to find God. I lost track of Him several years ago, at the time of the death of my

dearest friend. It's a puzzling task to find Him these days. He seems to be scattered about—in so many kinds of places. What are you trying to find?' " Peter smiled back at him and said:

" 'I am trying to find Roosevelt.' The little man gave a quiet chuckle."

" 'That should not be hard,' he said.

" 'It isn't. The only trouble comes when you try to crowd him into a book—catch him—hold him—pin him down.'

" 'Yes, that would be difficult.' "

Then the old man read Peter's manuscript. He was greatly impressed with it. It fascinated the old fellow. He returned it to Peter and said:

" 'I know very little about books, but reading yours, after what you have told me, I should say, that, if I were you, I'd feel very proud of what I had in me, whether or not I could bring it all out. Thank you for an afternoon that has carried me quite a long way on the road. For the bags of gold you speak of are in us all!' He hesitated, and then said, in a low, deferential tone, 'I'm inclined to think this gold is God!' "

And so it was that Peter discovered that even in the disappointments and the failures of life there was gold; and that that gold was often the gold of God.

Chapter V

The Truce of God

MARY ROBERTS RINEHART

Text: *Luke* 2-14. "Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace, and good will toward men."

THE STORY OF THE SPIRIT OF PEACE AND GOOD WILL THAT COMES UPON THE HEARTS OF MEN AT CHRISTMAS TIME

The Truce of God

God declared a truce with the world when he sent a little babe on Christmas morning.

When the angels sang that beautiful chorus, "Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men," they were the messengers declaring "The Truce of God."

Whenever Jesus Christ comes into a human heart in all of His fullness; and when a human heart makes a complete surrender to His will; by what Chalmers called "The expulsive power of a new affection" all evil is driven out and a "Truce of God" is declared in that heart.

One can hate nobody and one can hurt no person when that truce is on.

In a most beautiful fashion that "Truce of God" comes into human hearts the world over at Christmas time.

The story of the Great War that remains longest in my heart is the story of one Christmas morning.

The English had stopped firing. Then the Germans started again. This started the English.

A German officer suggested to his superior that, since it was Christmas, why not cease firing.

The German officer thundered, "What boots it, be it Christmas or not! Let that make no difference! The day comes for victory! Continue firing Christmas or not Christmas!"

So all Christmas morning the firing continued.

But suddenly firing ceases.

The German officer ran out of his tent to see why his orders had been disobeyed. He saw the cause. A litle child had wandered into the zone of fire. Both sides had ceased fighting. Germans and English ran out to get the child. They met in mid-field and exchanged Christmas greetings and tobacco and smiled. A little child had led them to "Peace and Good Will on Earth."

Just a story, some cynic says.

But those who know how human hearts become strangely softened at Christmas time know that it was entirely possible for this beautiful

thing to have happened. We know that even the bitterest enemies often declare a "Truce of God" at Christmas time.

This is exactly what happened in Mary Roberts Rinehart's beautiful Christmas story.

I have seldom found a little book that is so conducive to a book sermon for Christmas evening preaching as this one. The Christmas books which may be used in this way are few and far apart. One is "The Other Wise Man," by Henry Van Dyke, one is "The Knight of The Star," which is yet to be written by Dr. Lynn Harold Hough; another is 'The Man Who Was Too Busy to Find the Child," by Dr. Lucius Bugbee. Now we have "The Truce of God" to use to make the great story of "Peace on Earth, good will to men" dramatic and real in the hearts of the world.

It was an old French legend that on Christmas week from Thursday to Monday there should be a Truce of God.

And so it was that Charles and Philip the Black did not fight during the truce of Christmas week, although they hated each other. Charles owned the castle on the hill and Philip, his cousin, owned lands a few miles away in the valley. The wife of Charles had not borne him a child of male sex and he had been so unkind

to her that she had fled his castle and had taken refuge with Philip.

Charles hated Philip already, but this made him hate his cousin all the more.

This was the situation when the Truce of God came one Christmas long ago.

Little Clothilde was the daughter of Charles. "The child of his disappointment." She was not a boy. Therefore she could not inherit his lands. That was why he had driven her mother away.

But little Clothilde had a great loneliness for her mother so she went to the Bishop and asked what she should do to get her deepest Christmas wish, which was to see her mother.

"My father wishes for a son," she said to the Bishop. "If I should lie in a manger all night would I become a boy?"

The good bishop saw her earnestness and her loneliness and her sorrow and "the cloud that had been over the castle shadowed the bishop's eyes."

The bishop told her that she must do three things: she must sing, she must pray and she must do a good deed.

So one night she slipped into her father's room and, in her high treble voice started to sing. Her father was awakened from his sleep and thundered at her, "Back to your bed! Where is your nurse to permit this? Blood of the martyrs! Are you mad? Get back to your bed!"

But his heart was softened a bit and he let her make her plea.

"It is His birthday. I want to see my mother!"

Then she ducked under the curtain, for to speak that word in the castle was forbidden.

Her singing did not work the magic of softening her hard father's heart.

Then she tried the second thing. She prayed. She prayed that she would become a boy. But that did not work.

"I shall do a good act," she said.

Then she released the Jew who had been put into prison for usury.

Then she said, "Now, O Lord, I have tried song, and I have tried a good deed. I wish to see my mother."

Then Clothilde decided to start out herself to search for her mother. She was gone a long time before she was missed at the castle.

In the meantime Charles, her father, after an angry interview with the bishop, who chided him for his cruelty at Christmas time, decided that he would have a male child whether it were legitimate or no. So he called Joan of the village, a pretty peasant maid, to his castle on Christmas Eve.

There was much revelry and dissipation that night.

Charles was ashamed and the girl Joan blushed

with chagrin. She knew why she was there on that holy night. Then Charles thought of a fine thing to do. He would release the Jew who was in prison for usury. He would celebrate his new and unholy nuptial in that way.

But when he sent messengers to release the Jew they came back with the report that the Jew was gone and that his daughter Clothilde was gone also.

Suddenly Charles was shaken awake from his sins.

His father heart was filled with anxiety.

The search began. Every man in the castle was summoned.

They overtook the Jew and he told them that Clothilde had gone off with the fool on the horse that the fool had won the day before in the Christmas festival.

Sure enough, Clothilde had been picked up by the fool and even as the father, Charles, sped anxiously on the way the child and the fool talked of many wise things. And as they traveled the author says:

"And because it was the Truce of God the children went unharmed."

Clothilde got to wondering whether her mother still loved her and how she would be received by her mother.

"Toward morning, however, she roused the boy with a touch."

"She may have forgotten me," she said. "She has been gone since spring. She may not love me now."

"She will love you. It is the way of a mother to keep on loving."

"I am still a girl."

"You are still her child," answered the fool.

This is a beautiful picture; this picture of the fool, the wise fool, talking wisdom like that about a mother's love. And so it is that a mother's love brought the Truce of God to the world; and so it is that a mother's love brings the Truce of God to human hearts always.

But the fool saw that the child still trembled so he told her a story to ease her mind.

He told her a fable of the countryside; that of an abbot, who, having died and reached the gates of heaven, asked for admission. However, he was asked in return what right he had to ask admission at the golden gates of God.

"I am a slave of the Lord."

But he was refused admission.

After going away and laboring seven years he went back and said: "I am a servant of the Lord."

He was refused admission again and another seven years did he go away and toil. Then he

came back to heaven and said: "I am a child of the Lord," when he was admitted.

That morning the fool and the child reached the gates of Philip the Black and she was received within.

Three hours later Charles, her father, appeared. Philip came out to meet his cousin.

" 'Truce of God,' he said sulkily, from across the moat. And then: 'We seek a runaway, the child Clothilde.' "

Then he added again, as if reluctant to speak to Philip even on Christmas, " 'Where is she?'

" 'Your wife or Clothilde?' "

"Now all this day Charles had longed for one as for the other. But there was nothing of that in his voice."

" 'Clothilde,' he said."

Philip brought the child and she was soon hidden in the embrace of her father. Then he turned squarely and asked for his wife.

" 'She is ill, Charles. I would have told you sooner, but you lacked interest.' "

" 'How ill?' "

" 'A short and violent illness.' "

" 'How is she now?' "

" 'Would you like to see her?' "

" 'I doubt if she wishes to see me.' "

Charles went softly toward the room, when he heard a child's voice. It was a feeble voice but it

struck terror to his soul. He entered that room as if it was some sacred cloister of God.

"He went straight to his wife's bed, dropped on his knees before it and not for his life would he have spoken then. Inarticulate things were in his mind, remorse and the loneliness of the last months, and the shame of the girl Joan."

"He caught her hand to him and covered it with kisses."

" 'I have tried to live without you,' he said, 'and death itself were better.' "

" 'I want only our love, my lord, to make me happy. And now, see how the birthday of the Lord has brought us peace.' "

"She drew down the covering a trifle, close to his bent head, and showed the warm curve of her arm. 'Unto us also is born a son, Charles.' "

" 'I have wanted a son,' said Charles the Fair, 'but more than a son I have wanted you, heart of my heart!' "

And so it is that the Truce of God comes to us. It comes to us in our homes. The minute that we enter our homes; if they be the right kind of homes we declare a truce with the world of labor and competition. The minute that we step across the sacred threshold of home we quit the bickering of competition in business; and the battle is off for the time. So it is that home is a place of truce. Love is always a truce with hate and an-

ger. The story illustrates that. When all else failed to soften the heart of Charles, Love did.

At this beautiful Christmas season the Truce of God prevails.

A new atmosphere prevails. Men smile at each other who never smile all the year through. We find it hard to hate at that sacred season. You feel a new spirit in the air. Men smile at each other who were utter strangers before. Newsboys laugh aloud on the cold city corner. Conductors, in spite of the heavy traffic, smile. It is a happy world for a week or two whatever it may be before or after.

And so it is that some lives which seem to be all sunshine have simply carried this spirit of Christ through all the year. They have accepted a Truce of God in their hearts for all time. They bicker not; neither do they quarrel. They hate not; neither do they envy. They worry not; neither are they disturbed by every wind that blows. They are at peace with themselves, with their fellow man and with their God. They know the meaning of "Peace on Earth—Good will to all men."

And that is the Truce of God.

Chapter VI

The Resurrection

LEO TOLSTOY

Text: *51st Psalm, 7th verse.* "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

THE BOOK SERMON OF A BLACK SOUL THAT WAS MADE WHITE THROUGH REPENTANCE AND REGENERATION

It is the story of a great sin, a great penitence, and a great salvation.

Like "The Everlasting Mercy," we see a great sin done and a great penitence come, and a great regeneration take place.

It is an old, old story. Sin is always that. There is nothing new or original about sin. It does not take any particular intelligence to commit a great sin. Sin is "old stuff," to use an American slang phrase which sums up its lack of originality.

The Sin That Was Sinned

Katusha was a beautiful young girl who was staying at the home of the aunts of young Nekhludoff.

There was a lilac bush in the front yard and it was spring-time. The sap was running into the trees in great surging streams; the flowers were budding.

This young Russian had just come home from school; clean, and pure; a boy of high ideals and impulses. He was untainted by the world.

On this trip as he and Katusha played and romped in the front yard their play was as clean as the dew that fell in the petals of the lilac flowers; as clean as the water in the white stream that ran through the front yard in which they romped.

There was a game and suddenly the young man had hurt his hand. There was a bit of mothering, and blushes and close contacts of their bodies, hands and faces. Then their lips met in innocency and pure love grew up between them.

At the end of the vacation he had to go and the parting was hard.

Ten years elapsed and during this time a great change came into the soul of the young Russian.

Those ten years were spent in the army.

During that time he changed from a young man of high ideals to a man of low aims and brutish passions and instincts; during that time his ideals about women had undergone a subtle and awful change. He used to look upon women as objects of respect and adoration but now he

looked upon women as objects to satisfy his desires and nothing more. He had been eager to learn before but now he was so egotistical that life to him was an open book. Before he had been unselfish, but now he was utterly selfish.

The change was subtle and awful.

The change was from white to black; from day to night.

Such changes too often come into human souls in such slow insidious ways that we hardly know they are coming.

Sin works in this way.

Tolstoy says that all of this change came about; this degeneration; this falling of ideals; this toppling of the tower of moral consciousness, because he would not listen to that thing within his soul which we call conscience:

"All this terrible change came about because he had ceased to believe in himself, and had taken to believing in others!"

And so it was that he met Katusha the second time at the home of her aunts. It was a sad meeting for Katusha. Before, she was as safe with him as she would have been in her own father's home; but now, she was as unsafe as if she were alone on a storm-tossed sea with nothing to cling to but a narrow board; as unsafe as if she were in the impending pathway of an avalanche.

The Betrayal

Then came her betrayal.

It was a gloomy night for Katusha. The moon barely made its way through a dense fog which arose from the river. Somehow there seemed to be a weirdness, and a touch of shadow and gloom that night. This gloom seemed to suffocate the young Russian. He stood on a porch facing the fields and river. Katusha's room was near. Temptation was eating at his very soul. Passion was burning him up with desire.

Far off in the distance he could dimly discern a black hideous object. Then a cock crew.

The fog thickened. It was two o'clock in the morning and the household slept with the exception of Katusha and the young army officer. In the heart of the young Russian, love was dead and in its place arose brute passion. But in the heart of Katusha there was love; deep, genuine, pure, abiding, sacrificing, eager. And that is a dangerous combination.

As the officer looked off across the fields once again he beheld that dimly hideous object looming through the fog. And again the cock crew.

"And when he went out into the night again, he said to himself, 'What is the meaning of it all?' Was it a great joy or a great misfortune that had befallen him?"

The Reckoning with His Sin

Many years have passed. Katusha had her baby and was driven from the home of the aunts, but the army officer never went back to her. The woman always pays a fearful price for her wrong.

Conditions have changed for Nekhludoff. He has left the army and is now a prominent lawyer in St. Petersburg. He has attained popularity and power and place and positon. He is like Tito in "Romola." Much to his disgust he is summoned to serve on the criminal jury.

As he has prospered Katusha has been changing also. She finally lands in a house of prostitution. Fine clothes are hers and jewels.

The young lawyer knew nothing of her whereabouts nor did he try to discover anything about her. He had asked his aunts and they had informed him of her disgrace and that she had left them—to go—they knew not where.

At the strategic juncture of the book when he suddenly came face to face with his sin, he had so far degenerated that he was making love to "Missy" whom he really did not love but whom he desired because she could give him money and more power and place in St. Petersburg.

He had already broken up one home. He had so far degenerated in his soul that he was actually wishing in his heart that his own mother would

die in order that he might get her money. His mother dies and he feels a sense of relief over her death.

Then he is suddenly summoned to the jury.

A woman is to be tried. Her name is Maslova.

She is to be tried for murdering a rich merchantman in her room in a house of prostitution.

There was a hush in the courtroom when this woman was about to be brought in, for it had been rumored in the papers that she was beautiful. The jury waited; young Nekhludoff one of them. Then Maslova entered.

His heart leapt into his throat.

It was she; little Katusha. She had changed her name. She was now Maslova, the woman of the underworld; but there was no mistaking that unusual squint in her eyes. That was Katusha. It made her beautiful in girlhood.

There was something about her eyes, even when she was Katusha, that was fascinating. It was still there in the eyes of Maslova.

He shuddered for fear she would recognize him. He was fearful lest the whole courtroom hear his heart beating against his breast.

This vile woman; this murderess; this woman of the streets; this foul, sin-marked woman; this beautiful and yet awful thing, now called Maslova, actually was his little Katusha, whom he

had betrayed and now he was expected to sit in the jury box and try her for murder.

She does not recognize him and that causes him to heave a sigh of relief. He too has evidently changed much in her eyes or she would know him. Finally as he sits on the jury, composure comes and he involuntarily begins to contrast and compare this Maslova with Katusha. He remembers how sweet and fair Katusha was and then contrasts her with this hardened face, pocked with sin. He remembers Katusha's eyes, as clear as sunlight. He compares them with this woman's eyes; this Maslova who sits so near to him that he can touch her. He compares Katusha's cheeks always touched with the red beauty of health; especially that night when they played under the lilac bush; but now Maslova's cheeks are rouged and painted. Her form is emaciated; her eyes twitch; her mouth has grown into a permanent and suggestive curve. She has a haunted look. The contrast between Katusha, the pure, and Maslova, the harlot, tears at his heartstrings and seems about to break them.

He realizes that it is he who started all of this degeneration in a sweet and pure girl. That sin eats at his heart like some powerful acid. The awfulness of the fact that he, who is the cause of her sins, is sitting in judgment on this woman fills him with horror.

The situation is much akin to the situation that the young judge in Hall Cain's "Master of Man" finds himself in when he sits on the bench as the judge of Bessie Collister whom he has betrayed.

It is a tremendous moment.

Then this young lawyer begins to look into his own soul. The contrast of the difference between his own soul now and its purity the first time he ever knew little Katusha startles him as much as the contrast between Katusha and Maslova. He finds that the degeneration has been as great in his own soul as it has been in hers and he has no doubt but that the same changes have gone on in his face; that sin has left its mark on his own face as well as on his soul; just as it has on the soul and face of this woman.

Then suddenly he knows that he must make things right with her and in his own soul; and with his God. That thought flashes over his soul like lightning, tearing and lighting up the skies of his life with a sudden glow and terror.

Then He Faces Temptation

Then comes the great temptation.

He knows that he must confess his sins and make right his wrong to that girl.

He knows that there is no remission of sins unless there is penitence.

It looks as if the girl will be hanged.

He actually saves her from death but she is sent to Siberia where he later follows her and tries to make up to her all that he has done.

But as he sat there in the jury box, his great temptation was that, since she did not recognize him why should he confess? Her going to death or Siberia would relieve him forever of her presence.

It was so when Jean Valjean was in the courtroom and another man had been arrested under his name. He faced the temptation of letting that man go to prison for his own crime. He had become prominent. He was the mayor of the town. He was the inventor and the manufacturer. Here was a chance to let this man go to prison and bury his name and his guilt. But he could not.

He confessed all. They pitied him.

He said: "Pity me? Ah God, when I think of what I was about to do I deserve your envy and not your pity!"

And so comes the same temptation to this young lawyer.

But thank God, something is abroad in his soul that will not allow him to do that. It is God and conscience, and right.

He knows what he must do to cleanse his soul.

Then comes the awakening or the resurrection from sin.

In church phraseology, we call it "conversion."

And just about the time that we in the church are giving up the idea of "conversion," the literary world is fascinating its readers with this thrilling human story.

The Conversion or Awakening of His Soul

I have read a great many books, by a great many authors, but I believe that there is one chapter in this book that stands out more prominently in my mind than any other chapter of any other book that I have ever read, and that chapter is Chapter Twenty-eight of "The Resurrection," and the chapter is called by the name that the book was first issued under, "The Awakening." Thrilling, beautiful, soul-searching, soul-revealing, soul-cleansing, soul-redeeming, majestic, sublime are the thoughts that play through its lines. Like a great master organist, Tolstoy sits at his instrument and plays; not the intricate, technical melodies that are termed great music because they are complex, but the majestic, beautiful in music, because it is clear and simple. He plays, first the storm-tossed thunder of a soul in the dire struggle with conscience and as the storm thunders, and rumbles, and dies away in the distance; and then thunders and rumbles again; and as the lightning of temptation flashes across the backgound of a

black life we are swung along in sheer amazement and helplessness before the fight of a human soul. Then comes the triumph, and wonderful music it is. Sin weakens; conscience and right prevail; God in a human heart conquers; the sun breaks in glorious majesty and peace over the music as the great master organist plays; and before we know it, we hear the sublime music of a soul's awakening. That music flows like a quiet river through a green valley and floods our souls. We are bowed before God with the joy of peace in our hearts that we have been privileged to hear the master musician of human souls play.

The young lawyer is just home from the trial and his fight is on.

The chapter opens with this self-denunciation, "Shameful and stupid! Horrid and shameful!" He says this over and over to himself as he walks home along the familiar streets. "Shameful and horrid, horrid and shameful!" And he cannot get away from this phrase. His life has been black from beginning to end. It is besmirched with wrong. There is not a clean spot in it. He was once, however, like Tito of "Romola," a clean, pure youth. But like Tito he has degenerated until this sudden halting of himself in his downward progress into the abyss breaks something within his soul because of the suddenness of the revelation.

When he gets to his room, he remembers how he actually wished for his mother to die; he remembers every detail of his betrayal of Katusha; he remembers every detail of his treacherous relations with Mary Vasilievna, and with Missy. He paces his room as these things force themselves on his consciousness. It is a horrible time for him. The night progresses. Until finally he cries out in his soul:

"Knave and scoundrel! Let men judge me as they like; I can deceive them; but myself I cannot deceive!"

Then suddenly in the resolve of what might have been a great soul, he cries out:

"I will break this lie and confess all; I will make my life right; I will break this lie which binds me and confess everything, and will tell everybody the truth, and act the truth! I will go to Katusha, prisoner though she is, and tell her that I am a scoundrel and have sinned toward her and will do all I can to ease her lot. Yes, I will see her and ask her to forgive me. Yes, I will beg her forgiveness, as children do."

Then he stopped, folded his hands in front of his breast as he used to do when a little child, lifted his eyes, and said, addressing some one:

"Lord, help me, teach me, come enter within me, and purify me of all this abomination!"

"Then he prayed, asking God to help him, to

enter into him and cleanse him; and what he had been praying for had happened already; the God within him had awakened his conscience. He felt himself one with Him. All, all, the best that a man could do, he felt capable of doing! His eyes filled with tears as he was saying all this to himself, good tears and bad tears; good because they were tears of joy at the awakening of the spiritual being within him, the being which had been asleep all these years; and bad tears because they were tears of tenderness to himself at his own goodness.

"He felt hot and went to the window to open it. It was cool and fresh without, moonlight, quiet; the shadow of a poplar fell on the ground opposite him. He drank in the fresh, invigorating evening air. 'How delightful, how delightful; oh, God, how delightful!' he said, meaning, what was going on in his soul, the awakening!"

We all need this awakening in our sinning souls.

It takes an upheaval to shake our souls awake!

I had a friend once who was sitting in a New York theater watching "Madame Butterfly." In the vigil scene as Madame Butterfly sits watching through the night for the return of her American lover, a man behind my friend groaned aloud with agony and got up and ran from the theater.

That scene, awful in its pathos and intensity, had awakened something in his soul; the memory of some betrayal. The pressure was too great. It

drove him from the theater; perhaps to a vigil of his own such as came to this young lawyer.

Ibsen's "When We Dead Awaken," is the story of an awakening soul. Professor Rubec is a sculptor. He created a great piece of work called "The Resurrection." Until then he had done nothing but some small and worthless busts; trivial work, unworthy of a master sculptor.

He goes to the mountains and as he walks alone in the mountains, he suddenly knows that he is dead; that his soul has died. He has created no great thing; he has no inspiration to work; he has married but not for love; for mere convenience; fame has come and luxury and money; he has lapped at the milk of plenty; he has drunk of the wine of ease; but it suddenly comes to him there in the mountains that his soul is dead, dead, dead!

He knows that because there is no love, there is no inspiration. There is no greatness in him; no majestic stirrings of his soul. He is dead!

Then came love with its strange stirrings of his dead soul; Love with its awakening hand; Love with its quickening pulses; Love with its color and its passion and its strange stirrings of the beautiful in him.

It is on this theme that Ibsen wrote "When We Dead Awaken."

Under God, I wish that every human being could have this awakening from sin; this strange

stirring through the love of Christ; this something that rolls the stone away on the resurrection morn.

And so it is that in this great book, one sees the sin; the results of sin; the sudden reckoning with sin in the court room scene; the great temptation to get away from sin; the conviction of sin; the penitence; the prayers for forgiveness of sin; the regeneration from sin; or the awakening, and the resurrection.

And one knows as he reads; and one knows as he preaches his book sermon on this great theme that here is a perfect picture of that thing which sin does to a human soul, and that there is set down here in dramatic form the only possible remedy for such a state; and that is the forgiveness and the love of Jesus Christ; and that when a soul is black with sin, there is only one place to wash it white:

"PURGE ME WITH HYSSOP AND I SHALL BE CLEAN: WASH ME AND I SHALL BE WHITER THAN SNOW!"

Chapter VII

The Great Hunger

JOHAN BOJER

Texts: *Luke* 6-25. "Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger!"

Matthew 5-6. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled."

John 6-35. "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

Romans 12-20. "Therefore, if Thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head."

THE STORY OF A GREAT SOUL HUNGER AND HOW IT WAS SATISFIED IN GOD

The "Great Hunger" is on all souls.

Many books have been written about this great hunger from "Hunger" by Hamsun, to "The Great Hunger" by Bojer.

Indeed, these two books run the gamut for "Hunger" is simply a story of the most disgusting and beastly physical "Hunger," while "The Great Hunger" is the story of a soul-hunger.

Alfred Noyes voiced this thought when he said:

"I am full-fed
And yet I hunger.
Who set this fiercer famine
In my maw;
Who set this deeper hunger in my heart?"

It is the age-old, world-old, hunger for God.

It is the story of Peer, a young lad of the Norwegian mountains.

We climb high heights in this book; mountain-heights and soul-heights. We also dive into deep waters; soul-waters and waters of melting snows stored up in beautiful sunlit lakes.

Visions of Youth

The first part of this wonderful human story might be called "Visions of Youth" for that is what it is.

Peer is a poor boy in the opening of the book but suddenly over night a fortune is left him by the death of his father whom he has never known.

Then he begins to dream dreams and to see visions.

One day he is standing in front of an anvil where the smithy is making the sparks fly with each brawny stroke of his great hammer on white-hot iron.

And as he watched the sparks fly, he had his first dream. He would be a priest:

"But when the sparks flew showering from the glowing iron, he could not help seeing visions of his own—visions that flew out into the future. Aye, he WOULD be a priest! None of your parsons with spectacles and pot belly; no, but a sort of heavenly messenger with snowy white robes and a face of glory. Perhaps some day he might even go so far that he could go down into that place of torment where his mother lay, and bring her up again, up to salvation."

His second day of vision was when as a lad he was confirmed in the village church.

"Late in the autumn came the confirmation, and the old wooden church, with its tarred walls, nestled among its mighty tree-tops, sent its chimes ringing out into the blue autumn air. It seems to Peer like some kindly old grandmother, calling so lovingly: 'Come—come—old and young—old and young—from ford and valley—northways and southways—come, come—this day of all days —come, come, come!' "

And it seemed to say again as its sweet ringing swept out over the village hills and valleys:

"If ever you are in heavy trouble, come hither to me."

And so the church has ever been, a mother in time of trouble. And so its sweet voice has al-

ways spoken to human souls. "Whenever you are in trouble, come hither to me."

And even in the very midst of the writing of this sermon, the phone at my left rang insistently. A man's voice; a father's voice; wet with weeping; and broken with heart-ache said: "Our baby is dying! Her temperature is 105! The doctor has just gone—he says she cannot live long—will you come as soon as you can?" And his voice broke in a man's sob over the wires.

"Are you members of this church?" I asked.

"No, we are not members of your church, but you are the only preacher we have—we just go to your church—but don't let that matter——"

"Of course that won't matter—I just wanted to know. You are as close to my heart in your need as if you were a member of the church. I am the pastor of all who have need."

I hurried into the car and in ten minutes was walking into a quiet room where a sweet baby child, only seventeen months of age lay, white and dying.

I have seen so many—too many—such. A preacher knows the signs as well as a doctor. Pneumonia, the chalk white little face, pitiably white face; a face that haunts you and tugs at your heart for days afterwards; a face which nothing can drive away. There it was, the lips wide open, fighting for breath, the eyes already

locked and sealed by Death's touch—the head beautiful and large and round.

"She looked like this when she was well," the mother says, bringing a picture of a beautiful smiling, laughing child standing beside a big chair for her first baby picture. The mother bringing that picture to the preacher is enough to break his heart. But this is not time for him to let his tears be seen. He must be courageous for all.

"May I have a bit of warm water so the shock will not be great?"

"She is too far gone to feel the water on her darling head," says the mother. "We didn't just feel right not to have her baptized before she died and so we sent for you."

"Mary Louise—I baptize thee in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit——" and a mother's sob was the only amen in that room.

Then spoke the father: "We do not belong to your church but we knew you would come—Sir—Doctor—we knew you would come." Then he fumbled in his pocket and pulled out two dirty, soiled and torn bills to pay for the service.

"But a preacher never takes money for baptizing babies, especially in an hour of need like this," I said.

Then that big, strong fellow wept. Then the wife wept. Then the grandmother, busy with ice

packs on the child's head wept. Then the nurse wept.

"That is kind of you!" said the father; then added: "And of the church!"

And so the church is always saying through its ringing chimes: "Come unto me, ye that are heavy laden and weary and in trouble."

These two moments of vision in his youth stand out forever in Peer's memory. He is never quite able to get away from them through all of the troubles that later arise in life.

And these troubles begin shortly. The first shock comes when his benefactor and father dies suddenly and he is called to Christiania to see his guardian. This guardian informs him that his dreams of the priesthood are impossible; indeed that it will not even be possible for him to go to college; that he will have to get to work in the mills at once and earn his living. This news, coming as it did, following a belief on his part that he was rich, was a terrible shock to his soul. He went to the city to work.

The Struggle in the City

In his disappointment and poverty, his lack of an opportunity to go to school, Peer determined to make up for that lack by learning something new every day of his life.

"In the misty mornings, as he tramped in to his work, dinner-pail in hand, his footsteps on the plank bridge seemed hammering out with concentrated will: 'To-day I shall learn something new —new—new!' "

The great passion of his life was to learn. That, he somehow realized, was the way out of his slavery; that, somehow, was the one thing that would make up for his not having had a chance to get to college.

"The great works down at the harbor—shipyard, foundry, and machine shops were a whole city in themselves. And, into this world of fire and smoke and glowing iron, steam-hammers, racing machines, wheels, bustle, and noise, he was thrusting his way, intent upon one thing, TO LEARN AND LEARN AND EVER LEARN."

"There were plenty of those by him who were content to know their way around the little corner where they stood—but they would get no further. He would carve his way through, till he stood among the masters!"

"The works and all therein were already a kind of a new Bible to him; a book of books, which he must learn by heart!"

Peer was all alone in the mill town and he sent for his beautiful sister, Louise, to come and live with him. She came. Peer slept on the floor and Louise in the bed. They were as happy as larks in their poverty and their love. Louise had no

boy friends and Peer had no girl friends. They were all in all to each other and had a most beautiful affection. This love grew like some beautiful flower out of the black earth of their material surroundings for they lived over a livery stable amid the awful smells and dirty conditions.

But Peer worked so hard under such vile conditions that he fell ill and was taken to the hospital. Louise cried herself to sleep for several nights after he was taken away and then tried to get in to see him but they would not let her in. Peer missed seeing Louise. Everybody had visitors but Peer. Louise didn't come. He was lonely for her.

But she came at last bringing under her arm a bottle of lemonade and some food.

A day or two later Peer had a vision.

It had been a restless day in the hospital for everybody.

Peer had been dozing. Then Louise came:

"A dull, yellow light lay over the ward. The others seemed to be sleeping; all was quiet; save only the man with sores who was whimpering softly. Then the door opened and Peer saw Louise glide in, softly and cautiously, with her violin-case under her arm. She stood in the middle of the floor and, taking out her violin, began to play the Easter hymn: 'The mighty host in white array.' "

"The man with the sores ceased whimpering; the patients in the beds about opened their eyes. A cobbler, roused from his feverish dream, lifted himself on his elbow and whispered: 'IT IS THE REDEEMER. I KNEW THOU WOULDST COME! I KNEW THOU WOULDST COME!' "

A silence fell over the ward. Then Louise came over to Peer and stroked his face with her swollen hand and then glided out as silently as she had come.

For a long time it was silent in that ward until, at last, the silence was broken by the dying cobbler who murmured: "I thank Thee. I knew Thou wert not far away."

A few weeks after Peer got out of the hospital, one day when he came home from work a neighbor told him that they had taken Louise away with diphtheria. He could not see her, but one morning when he came to the hospital gate, he saw them taking her body to the graveyard in a cart.

The way he found out about her death stunned his boy-soul. He went to the hospital every day. That morning, he was insistent upon knowing about the condition of Louise.

He was ringing the door bell desperately when a red faced porter thrust out his head:

" 'What d'you want to go ringing like that for?'

" 'Fröken Hagen—Louise Hagen—is she better? How is—she?'

" 'Lou—Louise Hagen? A girl called Louise Hagen? Is it her you've come to ask about?'

" 'Yes. She's my sister. Tell me—or—let me in to see her.'

" 'Wait a bit. You don't mean that girl that was brought in here about a week ago?'

" 'Yes, yes, but let me in.'

" 'We've had no end of trouble about that girl, trying to find out where she came from and all. But, of course, this weather, we couldn't possibly keep her any longer. Didn't you meet a coffin on a cart as you came along?'

" 'What, what, you don't mean——?' "

Then poor, broken, desperate Peer, his only friend dead, started out to follow the cart. It had now gotten far ahead of him but he ran after it wildly, twisting and turning through the narrow streets. At last, he overtook the cart and followed it to the grave; heard the priest chant a few words, at the burial; remained behind until the keepers shut the gates for night and drove him out.

The Great Defiance of God

Then he went home to pray, but when he went to pray, a sudden sense of the cruelty of God swept over him and he cried out, against heaven itself:

" 'There is no sense in all this! It is cruel and unkind! I will not stand it!' "

Later in the night when he tried to pray, as since a little child he had folded his hands and prayed every night, he suddenly burst out laughing, and clenched his fists, and cried aloud: " '*No, no, no—never—never again!*' "

"Either God did not exist at all, or He was cold and pitiless. His whole little world was broken to pieces."

Then he heard a sound.

What was it?

It was a violin playing "The mighty host in white array."

" 'Louise, is it you playing?' "

"He could see her now out there in the twilight. How pale she was. But still she played. And now he understood what that twilight was."

"It was a world beyond the consciousness of daily life—and that world belonged to him."

" 'Peer, let me stay here.' "

And something in him answered: " 'Yes, Louise, you shall stay. Even though there is no God and no immortality, you shall stay here.' "

The Great Hunger

Following a great defiance of God, always comes a great hunger for God. It was true with Peer.

It is that way with life. The moment we have determined that there is no God, then God immediately manifests himself by putting a great hunger in our hearts for Him. It is often that way with love. The minute that we have thrust one whom we thought we had quit loving from us, we begin to hunger for that one all the more. That is a true test of real love in life. Absence is a test of love. When you can't get along without some one for long at a time, that is true love. So the minute that Peer thrust God from him and put God out of his life, that minute the great dominating, unresting, wistful, yearning hunger for God set up in his soul like some great disease.

Knowledge Did Not Satisfy That Hunger

He tried to bury that hunger in KNOWLEDGE.

"On Sunday mornings when the church bells began to ring, he would turn hastily to his books, as if to find peace in them. KNOWLEDGE—KNOWLEDGE—COULD IT STAY HIS HUNGER FOR THE MUSIC OF THE HYMN?"

Peer didn't quite understand himself. He did not quite know all that his frantic attempt to gain more knowledge meant, but some of his friends had it right one day when he passed them and one said:

" 'He'll ruin his health before long, the way he goes on grinding. I believe he's got an idea that by much learning he can learn at last to—Ha-ha-ha!' "

" 'To-to-do what?' "

" 'Why—to understand God!' "

Success Did Not Satisfy That Hunger

Finding that KNOWLEDGE did not satisfy that hunger, he buried himself in work. He went to Egypt as an engineer. He spent years there and made millions. He became one of the great engineering giants of the world. But the great hunger was still in his soul. Then he suddenly decided that if he could come back home with all of his millions, the great hunger would be satisfied. Knowledge did not satisfy that hunger; success in his profession did not satisfy that great hunger; making a fortune did not satisfy; attaining great power had not satisfied it. Now he would go back to Norway. That would ease the eating hunger of his soul.

Home Did Not Satisfy That Hunger

He came back home at spring-time, when all was beautiful with new life. For a time, his heart was full with the beauty and wonder of it all.

One evening as he looked about him at the lakes and mountains, he looked up at the sky and said "OH HOW BEAUTIFUL! HOW BEAUTIFUL! HOW BEAUTIFUL TO BE HOME AGAIN!"

But TO BE HOME AGAIN did not even ease that hunger.

Youth Did Not Satisfy That Hunger

Then he met a beautiful girl of the mountains; and the spring-time call of the little leaves for sap, and the call to nesting that leapt in the hearts of birds; and the call to mating that animals felt, and the call to life and beauty that violets knew —throbbed in his veins, and one night he felt the kiss of love on his lips and cried out to the skies:

" 'AH, DEAR GOD, WHAT IF, AFTER ALL, IT WERE NOT TOO LATE TO BE YOUNG.' "

He felt at one with:

"The dawn reddening o'er the hills;

"The goat grazing on a northern hillside dazzled with sungold when it turned its head to the east;

"A frog crawling up out of a puddle and stopping to wonder at the morning;

"Even the little insect with diamonds on its wings;

"And the grass blade with its pearl of dew."

Love of Wife and Child Did Not Satisfy

Merle was her name and she played a violin just like his sister Louise had done. All was perfect.

But there was even higher perfection than this. One June day, he looked down upon a white bed and a child lay there, beautiful with life. Merle was radiantly happy with the glory of motherhood.

But Even This Did Not Satisfy That Hunger

One night, months after the birth of his child, he was riding on his horse; the old restlessness again possessing him; the ancient hunger.

Knowledge had not satisfied it; success; power, fortune; home, love, renewal of youth, fatherhood. The hunger was still there as he discovered.

He sat astride his great horse facing a sunrise. He communed with his soul.

He said to himself:

" 'You know something of the struggle of humanity to higher forms; you know how humanity

has groped its way towards God for æons; you know something of the life of plants; the nest of a bird is a mystery before which you could kneel in worship. A rock shows you the marks of a glacier that scraped it thousands of years ago, and looking on it you have a glimpse of the gigantic workings of the solar system. And on autumn evenings, you look up at the stars, and the light and the death and the dizzy abysses of space above you send a solemn thrill through your soul.' "

Then comes the disturbing challenge:

" 'BUT WHAT OF ALL THIS? WHAT THEN? IS THIS ENOUGH? IS IT ENOUGH TO REST THUS IN YOURSELF?' "

" 'HAVE YOU AS YET RAISED ONE STEPPING STONE UPON WHICH OTHER MEN MAY CLIMB AND SAY: 'NOW WE CAN SEE FURTHER THAN BEFORE?' "

" 'WHAT IS YOUR FAITH?' "

" 'WHERE IS GOD?' "

" 'He is not—and yet He is!' "

Then Came Misfortune

The skies of Peer's life lowered. Black and threatening they came rolling down over his horizons. The lightning slit the skies, the thunders roared. Something ominous brooded over his holdings, and when dawn came, all that he had saved, all that he owned was gone. Financial storms had swept the trees of his careful grow-

ing to the earth. Floods of unrest in the stock market had undermined the foundations of his property and it, too, had gone down in the torrent. Nothing was left. He faced poverty. His family had to move from their luxurious quarters into what was formerly a shed. Then came a nervous break and his body and soul were shattered. The details of this break are too horrible to talk about. The author has pictured them in all of their heart-tearing details.

We have a picture of his home one night when he had gone to England to see if he could not make arrangements to finance a new invention of his mechanical mind; a new invention with which he may recoup his fallen fortune.

And that is always the awful thing about financial failure; the women of a man and his children suffer and that he cannot bear. That is worse than the fires of hell to him. That is hell!

The baby's name was Louise; named for Peer's beloved sister. It was time for Louise to go to bed and Merle, his wife, began undressing her. Soon the baby was lying in her bed with a doll on either arm.

" 'Give paper a tiss,' she babbled, 'and give him my love. And Mamma, do you think he'll let me come into his bed for a bit to-morrow morning?' "

Then the mother went out into the white Norwegian night. Her heart was broken, but like every true woman, she was thinking more about Peer than she was of her own misfortune and suffering. She was thinking to herself that Peer was out there on his horse coming home; out there over the black hills where a world of stars arose; out there upon some country road, the horse plodding through the darkness at its own will, its master sitting with bowed head, brooding. Then she prayed:

" 'Help us Thou above—and help him most, he has had so much adversity in these last days! Oh God, help him!' "

A week later, after an unusually grinding business conference, when the bankers had taken him in a pair of great pincers and had squeezed his neck he too prayed:

" 'Oh God help me! Help me! That I may save my wife and children's happiness!' "

Later, distraught, sleep left him and his wife soothing his forehead said,

" 'Dearest Peer, do, for God's sake, try to get some sleep!'

" 'I'm sure you're lying and brooding over things. Can't you do what that Swedish doctor told you—just try to think that everything is dark around you?' "

He tried this and suddenly everything seemed dark. But,

"In the heart of that darkness, waves arise, waves of melody, rolling nearer, nearer. It is the sound of a hymn—it is Louise standing playing, his sister Louise. And what peace—O God, what peace and rest!"

" 'Dearest Peer, do try to get some rest!' his wife cried in alarm.

Then he talked aloud to himself,

" 'Are the children of the earth grown so homeless? Do they fear to make a moment's rest? Do they dread to look inward and see their own emptiness? Are they longing for something they have lost—some hymn, some harmony, some God?' "

Then came a letter from his friend Kraus Brock —from far away Egypt and one line in it shook his soul awake. For he had been feeling that the only god worth while was the god of steel and flame. This letter read:

He remembered the old hymns of boyhood. He referred to those sweet days in the church; of how a hymn would linger all day in one's soul;

" 'And when we went out into the world, we went with some echo of that hymn in our hearts, and we might curse Jehovah, but in a corner of our minds the hymn lived on as a craving, a hun-

ger for some world-harmony. All through the busy day we might bear our part in the roaring song of the steel, but in the evenings, on our lonely couch, another power would come forth in our minds, the hunger for the infinite, the longing to be cradled—and borne up on the waves of eternity, whose way is past all finding out.' "

The Hunger Satisfied

It came about in a strange way. Peer, once the man of power and wealth was so poor that on a certain Christmas they did not even have enough money to give a poor few presents. Then came spring. Peer was forced to set up a crude forge and mend the farmers' tools. He who had once been the directing genius of great mills and shops and factories; he who had once been the greatest engineer in Egyptian projects. He was compelled to set up a cheap forge and mend tools for the farmers in order to live. Surely this was at the lowest ebb of life!

Then came the hatred of the brazier, his nearest neighbor. The brazier said that Peer was taking his living away by setting up his smithy. He was filled with hatred of Peer.

One morning, Peer pulled down the blossoms of one of the brazier's apple trees to smell their perfume. Then he heard a yell and the brazier had sicked his wolf-dog on him. But Peer caught

the dog by the collar and dragged him to his master.

Two days later he was at his forge when he heard a shriek from his wife. He rushed out. The wolf-dog had leapt at his baby's throat. The child died.

There was a battle in a human soul. Peer was out on the promontory of life. One part of his soul rushed out like a mad man, shaking his fists at heaven and God in defiance.

But another part of him had a spark of God left.

It suddenly dawned on him.

He says,

" 'I began to feel an unspeakable compassion for men upon earth.'

" 'And I knew now that what I had hungered after in my best years was neither knowledge nor honor nor riches; nor to be a priest or a great creator in steel; no, friend, but to build temples; not chapels for prayers or churches for wailing penitent sinners, but a temple for the human spirit in its grandeur, where we could lift up our souls in an anthem as a gift to Heaven."

"*If Thine Enemy Hunger; Feed Him*"

What happened then?

Well, there had been a terrible drought all that spring.

At last the people ventured to sow their crops. Then the frosts and sleet and snow came and froze everything.

Peer's neighbor, the brazier, had his ground sowed with barley but now he would have to sow it again. But he could get no seed, for the neighbors hated him since he had sicked the wolf-hound on the child.

No one would lend him barley and none would lend him money. People hated the sight of him.

Peer wasn't able to sleep that night for pity of his neighbor.

He got up about two o'clock and started out.

"Where are you going?" asked his wife.

"I want to see if we haven't a bushel of barley left," Peer said.

"Barley—what do you want with barley in the middle of the night?"

"I want to sow the brazier's plot with it."

"What—his—the brazier's?"

Then he took the grain; climbed the fence; and sowed the barley.

Then he said,

" 'THE SPARK OF ETERNITY WAS AGAIN AGLOW IN ME! IT SAID, LET THERE BE LIGHT!' "

" 'And more and more it came home to me that it is man himself that must create the Divine in Heaven and earth—that that is his triumph.

Therefore, I went out and sowed the barley in my enemy's field—that God might exist.' "

And what was this man saying when he sowed the barley in the plot of the man who had killed his child?

It is an echo of another great word that the world heard so long ago on Calvary, "FATHER FORGIVE THEM: THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO."

Chapter VIII

Treacherous Ground

JOHAN BOJER

Texts: *Psalm* 90-8. "Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee; our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance."
Job 10-14. "If I sin, then Thou markest me and Thou wilt not acquit me from mine enemies."
Ezekiel 18-4. "The soul that sins, it shall die!"

THE BOOK SERMON OF A SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Sin is treacherous ground on which to stand.

It always has been and it always shall be to the end! No man has stood on the earth of sin and stood safely.

There are several physical powers in nature that to me are terrible. One is a storm at sea. I know what a storm at sea is for I have been in several, and for utter helplessness, there is nothing to equal it. One thinks of all the thousands of ships that have sailed gayly out of port, never to be heard from again. What is the usual answer? Storm! Storm! Storm!

There is the awful power of an avalanche.

That strikes terror to the hearts of mountain dwellers. The thunder of an avalanche at night; the tremendous power of it; its power to crush and kill, and bury; to sweep from the face of the earth an entire city is terrifying.

There is volcanic power. I have seen volcanoes in Java that have swept ten thousand people into eternity over night. A friend of mine camped one night with a crowd of Y.M.C.A. boys in the old crater of Mt. Taal near Manila. About two o'clock that morning it got so cold that the boys could not sleep, so Lieutenant Richardson got up with the boys and they took boats and rowed from the island of Taal to the mainland of the Luzon lake. About five minutes after they landed, the entire top of Taal blew off, killing thousands of people. If they hadn't gotten cold, they would have been in the very mouth of the crater. Another friend of mine in Java told me that he visited a volcano in Java the morning after it had blown its top off. Floating in the river, and jammed against the bridges, and lying half buried in volcanic mud and ashes, he saw hundreds of what he thought were white people. This surprised him for he did not know that there were so many white people in eastern Java. But he found that when the lake in the great volcano had boiled over the water and mud had literally boiled

the color out of the brown Javanese until they looked like white people.

A flood is a terrible thing. I have lived all my life along the Ohio River. In fact I was born the year following the great 1884 flood. My birth time has always been reckoned in family dialogue from that great flood. I have seen the awful torrents of that great river sweep away steel bridges and play with granite buttresses as if they were child's toys. I have seen the Ohio river dig out a new channel over night and sweep away houses and mountains. It is a terrible thing to see the swift, relentless power of a river flood.

An earthquake is also a terrible thing. We know what they are. We have been awakened in the night time many times in California to feel our beds swaying, our doors slamming, and our pictures dropping from the walls. They will tell you that an earthquake is not a terrible thing but it is. They will tell you in San Francisco that fire destroyed the city and not the earthquake; but photographs taken at that time show entire houses that had sunk into the earth up to the second stories, and street car lines torn and twisted as if some giant had, with fiendish laughter, taken them in his two brawny hands and twisted them over his knees as a boy bends a hickory stick in play.

But of all the physical powers that fill one with terror, the worst is a land-slide. I, too, have seen

these all my boyhood days for one who lives in mountainous regions like West Virginia must live near neighbor to a landslide or move away. I remember the "Narrows" between Moundsville and Wheeling; that ten-mile stretch of road cut into the very side of the mountains by the steam shovels of progress, sliced out of the breast of those hills that overlook the Ohio; beautiful in summer but "treacherous ground" in winter; and never a winter passes that great slides do not sweep down from the hillsides to stop the traffic of cars and sweep away human life. And just above the "Narrows" is that old graveyard that was swept away when I was a boy by a landslide. I remember going up to this landslide that had swept a graveyard in its pathway; and I shall never forget the horror of that sight; with human bodies, baby bodies, bodies of men and women in utter confusion; half decayed; bones, dresses, heads, hearts, swept into a mass.

Even the dead had not been safe to live their long days of death; to take up their habitat for eternity and dust on this "treacherous ground."

"Treacherous Ground" is sin. Sin is "treacherous ground."

Sin is a storm at sea snuffing out human life relentlessly.

Sin is a volcano sweeping out human lives in the night.

Sin is a flood in the river of life, stealing upon humanity in the dark hours and clutching them in its swirling whirlpools of hate and hurt.

Sin is an earthquake. It brews for centuries. It eats away at the heart of a human soul; it grows more powerful as days and weeks and years go by; it accumulates power; and finally, it tears the foundations out from under a man or a woman and they go down to destruction.

Sin is quicksand and if it once clutches at a human soul, it sucks that soul, down, down, down, like the octopus in Victor Hugo's "Toilers of the Sea" until nothing but his clutching hand is seen above the surface.

Sin is an avalanche that sweeps down upon one. It has been accumulating for months and years. Then just a slight sin touches it off. Just a slight unkindness; bitterness, a bit of jealousy, hatred or hurt and suddenly that whole accumulation of the sin of years is let loose upon a human soul. Then comes the silence of death.

Sin is a landslide. Sin is "Treacherous Ground."

Ezekiel 18-4 says, "The soul that sins shall die!"

It is a blunt statement.

It has no frills or flowers in it.

It is unmistakable. It means what it says. It is clear as sunlight.

"The soul that sins shall die!"

If you don't believe it, try it! If you don't believe that statement, live with a preacher a month and go with him to the bedside of folks who have sinned and see how sin has clutched at their throats and killed them before their time. See the poison of sin; see the bludgeon of sin; see the choking fingers of sin; see the deadly gas of sin; see the bullet of sin; see the dagger of sin! Sin is back of every dagger, every bullet, every bludgeon, every crime. "The soul that sins shall die!"

This book "Treacherous Ground" is written to set forth that main thesis. Like "The Power of a Lie" which was written to show the awful ramifications of sin, this book is written to show that no man who stands on sin is safe. It is "Treacherous Ground."

The book opens with a young man, poorly dressed, visiting a priest. The young man, Erik Evje, has sinned. Sin has already begun to undermine his visions, his life, his plans; and he is a wanderer on the face of the earth. The boy had actually at one time considered the ministry as a profession. He had gone further than that. He had entered school. He had determined to preach.

But not with sin buried in his heart.

Three Sins He Had Sinned

His first sin, as the story goes, was the sin of the betrayal of a peasant girl in his home town. The peasant girl had killed a second child that had come to her and had been thrown into prison for this crime. But Erik, who started her on her criminal way was still out of prison and actually studying for the priesthood. But he could not make it go. He was standing on ground that was slipping out from under his feet. His conscience would not allow him to continue in the ministry.

Thank God for that! I do not believe that a man who is standing on "Treacherous Ground" can long remain in the ministry. There is something, under God's laws that makes that impossible. A minister of God may be incompetent; he may be stupid; he may be as ugly as mud in his physical being; he may be awkward; he may be inefficient; but under God he cannot sin and remain in the ministry. That is why so much talk is aroused over a man in the ministry who sins. The fact that a man stays long in the ministry is proof that at heart he is not a sinner.

It is the same with the church. Men and women cannot long remain in the church and sin. Sooner or later their very sin drives them out of the house of God. They do not feel at home therein. Either they are driven out or they cease

sinning. Either "the expulsive power of a new affection" enters their hearts or they are driven out of the society of good people by the very weight of their sins.

And so Erik could not long remain in the ministry with that sin on his soul and he left.

His second step was into a championship of the social rights of down-trodden people. He became a champion of the rights of labor. But even here he sinned, for he lived on the riches that his father had handed down to him; and he knew that those riches had been gained by his father through owning a liquor making establishment.

He himself knew that his father had spent a lifetime getting his tenants drunk by selling them liquor and then had stolen their lands from them while they were drunk. That was the way he had built up his powerful land holdings and his wealth. It was this wealth that was now keeping Erik in ease and he knew that when he lived on that wealth gained through the sins of his father, he was standing on "Treacherous Ground."

To cover this sin, he gave himself up to the labor cause. But here, too, he could not survive. He was soon betrayed because a fellow student came to him in need of a loan. He promised that student the loan. But he was jealous of the power of this student and he kept putting off letting

the student have the loan until at last the student was thrown into prison for his debt.

One evening, years later, Erik was acting as chairman of a workingmen's meeting. He had heard that after getting out of prison Mogstad, whom he had betrayed, had gone to America. This has been a great relief to him. But suddenly, as he was speaking, a bearded man at the end of the hall arose to oppose him. Erik started at the voice and suddenly their eyes met. It was Mogstad.

Every meeting after that, Mogstad was present. Erik dared not look at him. He felt as if Mogstad was there with a revolver pointed at him. On every question Mogstad opposed him.

"Whenever their eyes met, it seemed to Erik that Mogstad smiled an evil-omened smile; and soon he felt that he was being pressed closer and closer against the wall in the sight of every one."

Finally, he could stand it no longer. He leapt to his feet one night and cried out:

" 'I wonder if that gentleman is the right one to find fault with what others do!' "

Mogstad, feeling many eyes turned upon him, sprang upon a chair and said:

" 'Yes, dear friends, it is true that I've been a convict; but that man was the friend whose fault it was. Don't believe him when he talks beauti-

fully about the poor. I know him. He is a scoundrel and a liar!' "

A dead silence followed. But it was the end of Erik's power.

One is reminded in the dramatic scene in the labor meeting of that other denouncement in George Eliot's "Romola" when young Tito was at the banquet given in his honor. He had betrayed old Baldassare, his foster father. He had allowed him to be sold into slavery and had kept the old man's jewels; the jewels that might have ransomed him. It was a burningly vivid scene. It was in the midst of the banquet when the rich of Florence were toasting Tito that an old man stepped into the room, and raising his bony finger accusingly said "There is one among you who is a scoundrel and a liar and a robber! I took him from beggary when he was a child. I was a father to him. I made him a scholar. My head has lain hard that his might have a pillow. Shipwrecked, he left me in slavery. He sold my gems and when I came he denied me!"

You Can't Get away from Sin

Erik left the city to go home to his father's rich possessions. He thought to find peace there. He would give up his social ideas and live in luxury as a landholder. He would leave college,

he would leave the Labor movement. He thought to hide from sin in that way.

Little did this blind fool see that he was still standing on the treacherous ground of sin. You cannot change the geography of sin. It has habitat everywhere. Its habitat is in the human soul. It does not live in the city exclusively. It lives in the country as well. It lives wherever human beings dwell. Sin's habitat is in a human heart.

He tried to make himself believe that all of his trouble; his dissatisfaction with the ministry and his trouble in the Labor movement was because they did not understand him, and because they were not big souled enough to see. Sinners usually try to fool themselves into thinking that the cause of their sin is something besides their own littleness.

In nearly every instance, where I have been called into the home of a sinning man, he has tried to blame the trouble that inevitably comes into that home to some other source than his own sin. He persecutes and makes miserable his children and the wife he has sworn to love and cherish. He tries to make her believe, and he tries to make himself believe, that the whole trouble in his home is due to something outside of himself. But God knows. Sin always brings trouble into a home.

So Erik said:

"I will leave the city. I will leave these men. They do not appreciate what I am trying to do for them. They are ignorant fools. I will go to the country. I will go back to the farm and live as the Lord of all that I survey and get away from these troubles that are wrecking my life."

But sin followed him. It always does. You cannot get away from sin.

Tito tried that, but sin followed him to the banks of the Arno and then followed him as he swam until exhausted; and then sin leapt on his form and choked him to death. You can't get away from sin.

Young Dimmesdale, the preacher in "The Scarlet Letter," thought you could hide sin but he found that it followed him; aye—even to the scaffold in Boston with Hester Prynne by his side with her scarlet letter blazing on her breast.

Young Nekhludoff in "The Resurrection" thought he could get away from sin but it followed him even with all of his wealth and success to St. Petersburg and one day in the form of Maslova, the sinning woman, sin pointed an accusing finger at him.

You can't get away from sin. Saul Kane tried it but it haunted him all night long like "The Hound of Heaven."

You can't get away from sin! Norby in "The

Power of a Lie" thought that you could, but it hounded him to his death and finally it hounded his son and his home and his friends until in its intricate and bewildering power it had made to suffer both the innocent and the guilty.

You can't get away from sin! Saul thought that you could. He tried it but it struck him down on the highway to Damascus.

You can't get away from sin. Judas thought that he could, but it hanged him to a tree in bitterness.

No man! No woman! You can't get away from sin by running from it. It will follow you like the "Hounds of Hell." You may climb a tree to its uttermost height, like the priest in Masefield's "Hell-Hounds," but you can't get away from sin.

First: As the ship was nearing his home, he saw two sea-gulls circling about his head. He was feeding them bread. But suddenly a chill struck to his very soul. One sea-gull had a face like that of the girl he had betrayed, and the other had a face like Mogstad. He threw food to them to get a moment's respite from the awful haunting faces of the girl in prison and the friend he had betrayed! But the gulls kept following the ship and sweeping so close to him that he could see their eyes. He shut his own eyes in horror to hide those two faces.

Second: He thought that the peace and quiet of his father's home would hide sin and rest his soul. And in that quiet and peace he met Inga Rud, a beautiful young girl whom he had loved in youth and they fell in love with each other and he thought that would solve his problem of sin. But it did not.

It did not because the very day after he had met and fallen in love with this beautiful mountain girl, he was looking out of the window surveying his mountain possessions, conscious that he was the lord and master of all of the material wealth that life could offer a man. He even had love now. He had the quiet of the mountains. He had power. He had fallen heir to all of his rich father's wealth.

" 'Mother, who is that man there?' he cried as he looked at a strangely familiar figure.

" 'That's Peter Troen. Don't you know your men again?' "

His mother did not notice that he compressed his lips as if he had a sudden attack of toothache. For Peter Troen was the father of Olina who was in prison and that father had Erik's son to bring up.

Conviction of Sin

Then the author adds a single sentence that shoots like a blazing comet of conviction not only

into the heart of the book, but into the heart of every man and woman to-day who sins:

"If only there had been no memories!"

Yes, "If only there had been no memories," men might sin with ease and forget it.

But God uses "memory" as a bludgeon. God uses memory as a club of punishment. It is a relentless thing, is memory, where sin is concerned, but a gloriously sweet and beautiful thing where good is concerned.

What kind of memories are you building up for old age?

Are they memories that will sweeten your sunset years and make you smile as you sit, an old and helpless man in a chair by the window, as the latter days of life come upon you? I think that one of the most beautiful things in life is the privilege of calling upon or seeing an old man or woman who has stored up a gold mine of beautiful memories. That is a sublime thing. One can sit all day and watch their faces light up with glory at beautiful memories. I met a dear old lady who had beautiful memories. She told me about them.

"Daddy helped me get the breakfast as long as he was able. He tottered down the stairs and then one morning he could not make it and I knew that that was the end. I carried his breakfast up to him. I found him dead."

"A terrible blow," I said in sympathy.

"Yes," she said, "it seemed so then; but now it is a beautiful thing to think about—how Daddy helped me get the breakfast every morning those last months—even up to the last morning. It is a beautiful thing to think about!"

A young girl wanted to be married in the big empty church auditorium though she had but a few guests. I offered her my home. But no, she wanted a church wedding and when I asked her why, she said, "Oh I just want a little memory to keep!" God bless her.

But oh that other kind of memories! "Oh God, if there had been no memories!" as the Bojer book says.

Memory is a club in our own hands that we use in youth to beat our hearts into bleeding pulps in old age. God pity us! "If there had been no memories!"

A man is dying. He is wild with terror. He is afraid to die. He shrieks with fear. He tosses in the bed. Opiates fall from his body like water from a granite stone. They do not ease him.

Every preacher has seen this terror in a soul at dying time.

"Oh God, if there had been no memories!"

That sums it all up. Memories! They bludgeon you dumb. They eat at your soul. They

let you topple and fall when you think that you stand most securely. Erik had bad memories.

"One day he walked over his estates. The farm laborers were industrious. They looked at him so kindly. He found himself joking with them. There was a great deal of hay this year. The weather had been all that could be desired. Timber had risen in price.

"Why, he felt he could be the gayest and the most capable of them all if only he could get these secret wounds healed, these wounds that never gave him any rest!"

Trying to Make It Right

Finally these memories in the midst of what ought to have been peace drove him to an attempt to make everything right. All his life he had been trying to get away from the sin that he had sinned and he had not succeeded. Now he was to make a last desperate effort. He had found that coming to the ministry did not do it. There was a reason. He had found that taking up leadership in the Labor Movement did not rid him of his sin. He had found that coming back to the country did not rid him of his sin. He was still standing on "Treacherous Ground."

Now he is to make a last desperate effort. He cannot abide these memories. They haunt him. Sin always does.

He resolves to do the right thing by the girl he has betrayed. He will keep her child; he will get her out of prison; he will beg her forgiveness.

He realized that the wrong that he had done could never be repaired but he would do the best he could to make it right.

" 'What we do wrong can't be done quite over again, but to-day I've tried to right in some measure a wrong that all these years has tormented me more than any one's known.' "

Erik said this to himself as he thought over his wrong to the peasant girl and then he made a great resolve:

" 'When I thought that Olina was going to America I almost cried out with relief but became aware that this was another piece of cowardice. No, she shall come here! I tell you, mother, I'll look her in the face, I'll go to her one day and beg her forgiveness.' "

He is talking with his mother. He takes her upstairs to his room. He has been drinking desperately to drown his sin and ease his conscience. But he intends to make that right also. He says:

" 'Come here mother!'

"Frue Evje had to lean for support against the wall when she saw at the bottom of the stairs a trunk full of bottles."

"Then her son spoke:

" 'When you have nothing to live for, mother, no God and no ideals, that is what you have recourse to. But now I don't need it any longer!'

" 'God, I don't understand a bit of all this, Erik,' she whispered at last. 'God, God, I—I—don't understand——'

"Then she sank suddenly into a chair and burst into violent weeping."

He had won a victory; a tremendous victory. Like the young lawyer in "The Resurrection" he too went to the open window.

"He remained standing at the open window, breathing with a sense of freedom. He could now hold up his head and look every one in the face. He felt as if, during the last few days, he had been laboriously, bit by bit, saving his soul!"

"God Himself Can't Stop Them When They're Said"

But Erik found that this exultation of feeling was not all that there was to making things right. Erik found out what we to-day and in this modern American life must surely know. We must surely know that the results of sin can never be effaced. We see it in life about us. We may repent; we may be forgiven; but the results of our sinning go on into the eternity that follows us. That, to a thoughtful man, is the hell of sin! Jesus may have died for our souls; and if we accept Him he has promised to forgive us our sins

as He does; but that forgiveness does not stop the results of our sins continuing. For God Himself can't stop them.

"Boys flying kites haul in their white winged
birds,
But you can't do that when you're flying words.
Words unuttered may ofttimes fall back dead;
BUT GOD HIMSELF CAN'T STOP THEM WHEN
THEY'RE SAID!"

So it is with sin. God may forgive sin; Jesus Christ died to forgive sins but God Himself can't stop the results of sins that are sinned. That is the eternal hell of sin; that it goes on and on forever wreaking its awful vengeance on the innocent.

His first step in the discovery of this fact was when Olina came home from prison. He found her a coarse, ugly, dead soul. He met her at the dock when her boat landed. His spirit was right. Before the whole town he would confess her. Before even his sweetheart, he would acknowledge her. He found her coarse and seered. She had not any understanding at all of what he was trying to do. The possibilities of that had been killed in her soul.

When he set her down at her father's cottage, he felt that his account with her had been settled.

"But on his way homeward, he sat with bent head."

He found out that that account, and the account with sin could never be settled as far as the external part of it was concerned.

Newland and New Hope

Then he conceived of the idea of "Newland."

He would settle a certain portion of his land on the workers. He would give them that land free to atone for his sins. He would let them build their cottages thereon forever, rent free. It was theirs. He would even help them build their homes.

This became an obsession with him.

He thought more of Newland than he did of any of the rest of his work. Somehow it was to atone for his life's sins. He would give them their own land and homes. He selected a piece of ground on the brow of the hill, overlooking the river.

The peasants built their cottages there without cost. It was theirs. For a time, this seemed to give peace to Erik's soul. Now he was redeeming himself.

Then came the visit of the engineer. It was like a bolt of lightning out of a blue sky. It

was as if some brute had hit him over the head with a club.

" 'Speak away! Speak away then!' said Erik impatiently."

The engineer: " 'Your idea about the laborers' holdings is admirable and good and, therefore, it's a great pity that you'll have to give it up.'

" 'Give it—up? Give it—up? What do you mean?'

"Erik grasped the back of the chair to keep from falling.

" 'Yes, give it up.'

" 'But man alive! Don't you know that there are several families living there already?'

" 'That's just the pity, for you'll have to ask them to move,' said the engineer.

" 'There's a quagmire up there and there may be a landslide at any moment. An autumn or a spring flood will be enough to carry the whole hillside down into the river!' "

But Erik refused to heed the warning of the engineer. He still kept on erecting cottages on that hillside. He pledged the engineer to secrecy about the danger for fear it would spoil his scheme of Newland.

He knew that he was wrong in not warning the people on Newland of the danger. He was like a man who lives with a secret fear and sin. It was always on his mind. He could not be natural and normal. It ate at his soul. The

author uses a more homely simile. It is that of a man who has a sore place on his foot. He may laugh and joke and walk as if nothing were the matter; but that sore is still hurting. So it was with Erik.

He would become irritable when it would rain for a day for fear of what might happen at Newland.

He would scold his wife. Sin is like that; secret sin. Men take sin out on those whom they love.

Warning of the Danger

Then came the beginning of the end.

One day a young man who was pursuing scientific studies in Erik's woods came home to the farm and reported that all the ant hills had become empty on Newland. Wherever you looked, the ants were swarming away from Newland. They seemed to have a premonition of danger.

Then the old doctor of the village was called to Newland on a case and as he drove over the soft ground in the rains, his dog howled and whined and his horse snorted and sniffed and refused to walk on Newland.

The dog refused to walk on Newland and stayed behind on the bluff, and the doctor went back to see what was the matter. All that he saw was a flock of black crows hovering like a

cloud over Newland and making a great confusion and noise.

That night a resident of Newland hearing the howling of dogs and the strange and fearful lowing of cattle got up and went out. In a minute he came running back. His wife heard him burst the door open, as he rushed wildly into the room.

" 'Ingeborg,' he cried, 'make haste and get up! Oh God help us.'

" 'What is it?' she asked but did not move.

" 'The cowshed!' he stammered, taking hold of her to make her get up. 'The cowshed's gone, Ingeborg!' "

But it was too late. The landslide had come. In five minutes all hope was gone and the inhabitants of Newland, crying with fear, hugging each other to their breasts; mothers holding little children to their faces, kissing their lips as the waters closed over them; giant men clutching whole families to their hearts; went down, down, down into the black and swirling waters of the river.

From the beginning of his life to the end, Erik had stood on "Treacherous Ground."

Everything that he had done had been done to bring peace to his soul.

His taking up of the ministry was for that purpose; his taking up the championship of the Labor Movement had been for that selfish purpose; his

coming home to the farm had been for that purpose; his building of Newland had been for that purpose.

Several things stand out in this book:

First, that sin is a relentless pursuer. You cannot get away from sin.

Second, that without real and sincere repentance, there is no salvation.

Third, that whatever forgiveness may come to the soul that sins, the sin goes on forever. Its effects cannot die.

Fourth, that the innocent are swept down with the guilty and sometimes not even the guilty go with the innocent.

Fifth, the author of this book seems never to have heard that Jesus Christ died to save men from their sins. This young Erik tried every way to atone for his sins but he never found the real way. He seems honestly to have been trying. He never, however, got beyond a selfish desire to bring peace to his soul. He never seems to have suffered for his sins. He never seems to have wept over them. Without that, there is no peace.

Chapter IX

The Passion for Life

JOSEPH HOCKING

Texts: *Luke* 12-22. "And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life——"

Psalm 91-16. "With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation."

THE BOOK SERMON STORY OF A MAN WHO WAS ABOUT TO DIE BUT WHO FOUND LIFE IN SERVICE AND LOVE

When a great, virile, rugged character like Theodore Roosevelt, whom we have always been accustomed to associating with the strenuous life, and with vitality of the super-man type, and with ever-living, quietly turns to his Negro valet and says, "Put out the light," and that means for eternity as far as this life is concerned, the whole world receives a shock.

When a man like Kitchener of Khartoum starts out on a sturdy ship and the news comes flashing across the world that Kitchener is no more; that the waves chant his deathless dirge; we sit up and rub our eyes in amazement.

When a "Titanic" goes down and the news is flashed across the skies by wireless that a great rebel soul, and a man who bludgeoned his way into the public eye with the smashing blows of a great literary originality in the person of Elbert Hubbard has gone down forever; somehow we are startled.

When a man like Horace Dodge dies over night; a man who is in the prime of life—a great, virile, rugged man—a man upon whose shoulders a great automobile industry is resting like a huge world on the shoulders of an Atlas; an automobile Atlas; we are startled again.

For somehow it seems that souls like these ought not ever to die. We cannot associate death with such men.

And linking these sudden deaths up with this great, strong book called "The Passion for Life" we understand why it is that we have this sense of the impossibility of death in such men. We count on death for ourselves. We expect it for us lesser mortals but somehow it does not seem that it will ever come to such men. This is because we have in our souls

"The Passion for Life"

I have wondered much what our attitude toward life itself would be, if, as in the case of the young hero in Hocking's story, our doctor

should come to us to-morrow morning and say: "You have only a few months to live; perhaps a year; certainly not more than a year. You have an incurable disease. Get your soul ready in this year's time to meet its Maker!"

I have been deeply touched with the story of the death of Mr. Dodge, the great automobile king. A year ago he watched by the bedside of his beloved comrade-brother. It broke his heart when that brother died. That death was the severing of a life-long friendship which was closer than that of Damon and Pythias. It was a beautiful thing in a sordid world.

Within a year the remaining brother has gone and to-night he lies side by side with his beloved comrade-brother. Once again they are united in death and sleep, the everlasting sleep in the same tomb.

I have been wondering how Mr. Dodge would have lived this year out if the doctor in New York City, where his brother died a year ago, had come to him and said: "Mr. Dodge, your brother lies dead at this hour. In less than a year you will be dead also."

I wonder how Mr. Dodge would have lived with that news in his heart.

I wonder how any of us who have "The Passion for Life" in our souls would spend the next year if we had that warning in advance. And

yet, for many of us that warning is as well as given.

The Doctor's Sentence

The young hero of the story has just visited his doctor and that doctor has sentenced him to death. And a death sentence to an intelligent man is a fearful thing. The more one thinks the more terrible it is. Not like the colored man, Sambo, who was up to be sentenced to death. The judge said: "Samuel Johnson, based on the verdict of the jury I hereby sentence you to be hanged by the neck until dead on the thirty-first day of August. Have you anything to say?"

Sambo looked up at the judge with a pleading look in his eyes, with characteristic indifference to anything just so it isn't to happen soon. "Sure, Jedge—you all don't mean dis comin' August, I hope!"

The Church's Answer

You will remember in the book that the first thing the hero of this tremendous story wanted to do when he heard his sentence of death was to go to a quiet little village in Cornwall. He and his servant, Simpson, found such a house on the sea-shore. It was a mysterious, deserted house, haunted because a man had supposedly been murdered there.

With the bracing sea-winds came a great passion to live into the soul of the hero.

He says:

"Now, however, it was different. The world seemed wider, the sky higher, and life promised infinite things. I could not formulate them into words; nevertheless, they surged up in my being like a mighty torrent, and I longed to live! My whole soul revolted against cessation of life and all the time I knew that a dread disease was slowly working within me."

So like all men when he knew that he was to die in addition to revolting against death, he began to think about God. He asked his servant Simpson about the Bible and about God and about the parish church. That is the first thing that men think about when they know that they are about to die.

He talks to Simpson about death:

" 'Yes, the truth is, Simpson, seeing the doctor tells me I have to die very soon, I should like to know what happens after death.' "

" 'I have a Bible here, sir,' " said Simpson. " 'It tells you all about it there.' "

" 'Are you a Christian, Simpson?' "

" 'I hope so, sir.' " He looked at me curiously.

" 'Excuse me for asking, but as you are a Christian, you will have ideas about these things.' "

" 'Excuse me, sir,' " said Simpson, " 'but you will not be offended if I ask you something?' "

" 'Oh, no,' " I said. " 'Go on!' "

" 'Well, then, sir, have you ever been converted?' "

After this dialogue our hero went to the church and heard the preacher preach. But he got no satisfaction. Then he asked to visit the curate, but the curate frankly confessed that he did not know; that he was much in the dark about the great question of immortality.

"I hungered for light. I did not want to be critical. But I left the church with a heavy heart."

"I did not want argument! I did not want learning; but I wanted conviction, light, vision—and the church had none of these things to give me!"

Then that Sunday night he went out to the cliffs on the shore alone. In the dying light of the day, he could see the giant cliffs stretching far away northward. He could also see the long line of foam where the waves broke upon the shore. He could hear the sea-birds crying. And then, in the hunger of his heart and in the still beauty of the evening and looking up at the stars and out at sea, he kept saying over and over again:

"If a man die shall he live again? If a man die shall he live again?"

But no answer came. He went to bed that night wondering.

The Groping for Light

From the lonely night of that scene; from the day the church gave him no answer, there was an earnest groping and struggling for light.

One evening he was talking with Simpson again.

"Did the preacher help you, sir?"

"Well, he did not seem any more certain than you did, Simpson."

"Yes, sir, I cannot understand it. I was at the deathbed of my father, sir; he was what you call an old-fashioned Methodist. He was not clever or learned, or anything of that sort; but he was very sure, sir."

"Sure of what, Simpson?"

"Sure that he was going to heaven, sir; sure that this life was only a school for a greater life, sir."

"Thank God for the Christians who are sure!" said his master.

Then Simpson handed his master John Wesley's *Journal*. The *Journal* was a distinct help to him in groping through the darkness. He says of it:

"My word, but religion meant something to him! It was not a mere name, a tradition, a set

of dogmas, a respectable institution. It was something real, vital, pulsing with life!"

"To him the founder of Christianity was not a mere mystic and social reformer who lived nineteen centuries ago on a little strip of land on the east coast of the Mediterranean, but a divine person, who lives now!"

"I went on reading page after page until, looking at my watch, I found it was past midnight."

Later he commented on what he had read in Wesley's *Diary*. It is easy to see that the reading of this diary of a man of positive conviction was helping him through the darkness.

"If John Wesley, whose diary I have been reading, is right, what we call life, that is, life here, is a very small matter; it is only a fragment of life. Death is only an episode!"

Then he met Isabella Lethbridge. She was a beautiful girl. He came upon her one evening at twilight in the fields near the sea-shore. It was a thrilling experience. He knew that he loved her and yet was faced with the terrible fact that he only had a year to live; that he had no moral man-right to tell her of his love. Then he had a second struggle on his soul, for in addition to his groping for religious light, there was this fight against confession of his love.

That immortal night a sudden and great resolve took possession of his sick soul and as he walked

up the hill toward his home—listening to the waves along the rugged, cliff-bound shore, while great sea-gulls wheeled over his head, he raised his arms on high, and cried out to the night:

"I won't die! I simply won't die! I won't die! God, I won't die! I simply won't die!"

Then came his second conversation with Simpson, his servant. It was once again over Simpson's Christian father and his death. Simpson seemed to cling to that great father of his and to that triumphant death, as many of us do.

Thank God for the memory of a mother's prayer, the memory of a father's religion, the memory of the old home church on the hillside or in the valley; thank God for the memory of clean, fine days when faith was triumphant in the old home and we used to gather about the organ and sing the old hymns. Our hearts are warm with such memories.

It was an abrupt conversation, but Simpson started it after an hour of evident brooding.

"Pardon me, sir, but you don't know as much as my old father did in spite of your schooling; and he never had a day of schooling in all his life."

"How is that, Simpson?"

"Well, sir, he knew there was a life after death. He saw the angels, sir!"

"Did he tell you so, Simpson?"

"Yes, sir, he did. He was a very ignorant man, sir, but he knew. Besides, sir—excuse me for saying it—but aren't your opinions very foolish, sir?"

"I dare say," I replied, "but to what particular opinions do you refer?"

"Opinions about dying, sir. If a watchmaker makes a watch, he makes it to keep time, doesn't he?"

"Yes, Simpson."

"Then, sir, I know that I cannot answer you properly, sir, but I do not believe that Almighty God is a fool!"

"What do you mean, Simpson?"

"Well, sir, I have an old watch which my grandfather used to carry, and it keeps good time still. The watch was made by a man, and it has lasted nearly a hundred years. Now, I don't believe that God Almighty would take so much trouble in making us and then let us last only twenty or thirty years!"

Then Came the War

The reader will remember that Mrs. Lethbridge, mother of Isabella, had been a frivolous busybody. There was no single spark of spiritual light in her make-up. Father Lethbridge was a big, gruff, careless, hard man. Hugh was the son of the family, a big strapping fellow. He heard the call of his country at once, but long

before he heard it, fell in love with a girl of the village and married her. The father, who wanted him to marry a wealthy girl, refused to speak to him for disobeying his will. He was a hard man with no religion—and he shut his soul to his son, Hugh.

It was a heart-breaking situation, and our hero, who had only a few months to live, had come to love both Isabella and Hugh. The unhappiness in this family was his third great burden. But, strange to say, through these very burdens he was getting nearer to the light.

First came the mother of the Lethbridges:

"O Mr. Erskine, you are Hugh's friend. I pray a hundred times a day that his father's heart will soften toward him. Somehow I think it will because God has answered my prayer, in keeping Hugh in safety. O Mr. Erskine, I never prayed in all my life as I have been praying lately. Now that Hugh has gone and left me alone, and while he is in terrible danger, I am obliged to pray! God has become more real to me lately; why, Mr. Erskine, his father cannot keep a hard heart toward Hugh when he is such a hero!"

And Mr. Erskine, the hero of "The Passion for Life," went home to his cottage that night on the sea-shore feeling nearer to God, feeling as if the light was breaking a little for him.

Through this mother's need and faith and sorrow he was feeling rather than finding God!

First through Simpson, his servant, then through the memory of Simpson's religious father; through John Wesley's diary; then through the war; and now through Mrs. Lethbridge, he was seeing the light break.

The Death of the Vicar's Son

Then came strange light, in the death of the vicar's son who had been killed in the great World War. It was the same vicar who did not seem to be certain about God or immortality when Erskine went to church before to get help. But he was a different man now.

The vicar himself came to call on Erskine at the cottage by the sea.

There was a knock. The vicar stood at the door. He looked ten years older. His face was haggard and bloodless. The skin hung in folds. One could see by his eyes that he was a stranger to sleep.

"It was your son, then, that was killed?" queried Mr. Erskine.

"Yes, my oldest son; both were in the army. One is still alive, thank God; but Ned—my boy —Ned——" Then for a moment he broke down, his whole body trembling violently. He recovered himself in a few seconds, however.

"I do not complain," he said. "In a way I am proud!"

"I think I understand," said Erskine.

"I shall never be the same man again. It seems as if a part of my life is buried with him away in the little French cemetery; but at this moment there is no prouder man in England than I. My son, my son, has given his life for honor, for truth, for God!"

He spoke like a man inspired. Every word was weighted with a new meaning.

Then he told of how he had received the news:

"I revolted against it!"

"I told God He was hard!"

"But by-and-by my mind became clearer. I began to understand. Not that I could put my thoughts into words; I cannot now. Presently I began to pray. I do not think that I had really prayed for years—now I know——"

Then remembering that Erskine had come to him, a clergyman, for help and he had not been able to give it, he said with tears in his eyes:

"I am ashamed that I could not give you help —but I understand now as I never understood before! Do you remember that story of David standing at the gates of Jerusalem, waiting for news of his son, and who, when the news came, cried out, 'O Absalom, my son, my son, would God that I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son!' I understand that now. I think I understand something more——"

"You will wonder why I came to you this

morning. I do, too, except that I could not help coming. Do you remember what our Lord said about blind leaders of the blind? No, I am not blind, but I am like a man who was cured of his blindness by our Lord, who said he saw men as trees walking. It is a strange story, isn't it? But, O man, what fools we are! What blind fools! And how God Almighty opens our eyes and shows us our foolishness!"

And then it is that we begin to grow toward God; when we know that we are blind fools and we hunger that God will make us see.

And so it was that Mr. Erskine, he who was doomed to die; and he who was seeking light on immortality—he who was groping in the dark found a new ray of light through this blind preacher's new light.

Light Through Mrs. Rosewarm's Sorrow

Hardly had the preacher gone when Mrs. Rosewarm, an ignorant woman of the village, came to Mr. Erskine.

I have been wondering as I have studied and read this thrilling story why they all came to this man who was about to die. He had in two months become a sort of "father-confessor" to the village; to rich and poor alike; to ignorant and wise; even more so than the clergyman of the village. I have discovered that it was because he

was about to die and his heart was tender toward all humanity. The troubles of other folks were his troubles now as they had never been before. Before he had been indifferent because he was wealthy and well cared for. Now his money meant nothing. God meant everything. He was just a common, human being now; bound, as were all other human beings, toward the great mystery. This would make any of us more tender.

Then spoke Mrs. Rosewarm:

"O Mr. Erskine, ain't 'ee heered, my dear, the news?"

"Heard what?"

"About my dear boy. He's killed, me dear!"

"Killed?"

"Yes, me dear! They 'ave killed 'im."

Never did Mr. Erskine hear such pathos in a human voice. There was no bitterness, no suggestion of vengeance in her voice, but there was pathos; deep, unutterable pathos.

"But O, dear Mr. Erskine, I am not as one of those who sorrow without 'ope."

"No," said Mr. Erskine, "what hope have you?"

"Tom was a good boy, dear, 'e was a good boy. And I know that Tom is safe with his God! Tom was a good boy and I ain't got no fears. 'E 'as gone straight to God, 'as Tom!"

And so came these two deaths and these two broken-hearted parents; with their old and their

new faith; with their certainty of God; to break the clouds away.

The preacher walked away. Mr. Erskine followed him, hardly knowing why he did so, not wanting him to know that he did. He went into the church.

"How quiet it was. Not a sound disturbed the silence. Not even the murmur of the sea reached me there. At first I thought that place was empty; that the vicar had passed through on his way home. But I was mistaken. Kneeling at his desk I saw him in prayer. His eyes were fixed on the stained glass window over the communion table, but I am sure he did not see the figures of saints and prophets that were there. He was looking beyond. I turned and went silently away.

"But as I went, I never hungered before as I hungered then. I hungered for some assurance that life was deeper, greater, diviner than that suggested by the theories of man!"

Mr. Lethbridge's Sorrow Brings Light

And finally more light came from an unexpected source. Mr. Lethbridge, father of Isabella and Hugh, had been implacable in his refusal to write to Hugh since he had gone to war. He didn't even allow Hugh's name to be mentioned in the home. It was a heartache to all. Even the burden of it was upon our hero, Mr.

Erskine, who had soon to die and who was fighting the fight to keep from confessing his love; and who was seeking God.

One day when Mr. Erskine was unusually ill and felt that the day set for his death had surely come, he was awakened by voices at his door.

Simpson reported that it was Mr. Lethbridge. He had come to announce his son Hugh's death.

And the tragedy of Hugh's death was not his death but that he had died without knowing how much his father had loved him. The father spoke.

"I am a just man," he said. "That is, I have tried to be just. I did what was right. He ought to have obeyed me. I was his father, and it is the duty of a son to obey his father; besides, I had done everything for him. I sent him to one of the best schools in England. After that I sent him to the university. I had great plans for him. But he disappointed me. He married the girl I told him he must not marry; he did that which I forbade him to do; therefore, I was right in driving him from the house. But it was all of no use; *he was my son still!*"

"Of course he was," I said.

"Ah, yes! but there is the tragedy of it. He has died feeling that he was not my son, remembering what I said to him. That is the tragedy! Oh, how God Almighty must be laughing at me!"

"Not if there is a God," I replied.

"Why, don't you believe in God?" He burst forth, almost angrily.

He jumped to his feet and paced the room.

"I don't know, but if there is a God he pities you!"

"How I loved that boy!" he broke out. "And he didn't know it!"

"Yes," I said, "that is the tragedy. That is the unforgivable sin."

The Triumph of Truth

Then came in rapid strides the victorious light of truth into a man's dark night of unbelief.

First came the reading of the New Testament.

Mr. Erskine, after the experience of going through all of the sorrow of the village with each suffering home was getting close to God unconsciously. Through each sorrow he had seen men brought to the feet of Jesus. He had heard Simpson tell of a father who might have said: "I know that my Redeemer liveth." There was no uncertainty in Simpson's father's religion when he was facing death.

Then had come Simpson's simple faith itself.

Then had come John Wesley's diary.

Then had come his love for Isabella Lethbridge.

Then had come the terrible days of the Great War.

Then had come Mrs. Lethbridge with her utter dependence on prayer in her great need.

Then had come the vicar's sorrow in the death of his son and his leap to God through that sorrow.

Then had come Mrs. Rosewarm's sorrow in the death of her son and her absolute consciousness that he had gone "straight to God."

Then had come the regeneration of Mr. Lethbridge in the death of Hugh.

And through all of these great tragedies he saw something working. That something he came to know as God.

Then he took to reading the New Testament and, as he read it, a great white life began to stand out in his life. It was the life of Christ.

"But I have not learned the secret of the Man Jesus. I cannot rid my mind of the thought that he was a Visionary. And yet I don't know; there are times when I cannot get away from the belief that his words were founded on the Book of Truth."

SECOND CAME THE PRAYER MEETING:

He tells about it in his diary:

"When I came back from the prayer meeting the other night, I felt as though Jesus said to me what he said to the man in olden times who asked him questions. 'Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God!' "

And then came the great cry of his soul:

"If I believed in God, if I were sure of God, sure of the message which Jesus proclaimed, I could laugh at death; for I should know that out of discord would come harmony, and that out of incompleteness would come completeness. But that secret is not mine. I only dimly hope!"

The Darkness before the Dawn

Then it came like a flood of light; like the breaking of a new day; it came just after that great lonely despairing cry. He had been so near and yet seemed so far away from God.

"I felt a Presence.

"At least that is the only word I can think of to express my thought. I had no consciousness of a person near me, and yet that something was all around me, an intelligence, a will, a power. What it was I could not tell, but that something answered the questions that came to me.

"The one predominating thought or consciousness which flooded and overwhelmed everything was the consciousness of God!

"O God!" I cried, "let me not see, I cannot bear it!"

"Then I saw order coming out of chaos, light out of darkness, love out of hatred, divinity out of bestiality, life out of death!

"For life and love were all!

"A sense of triumph, of exultation filled me, bore me up as if on the wings of eagles. I saw everything from a new perspective!"

Christmas and Its Glory

Christmas is always a time of great glory but it was of greater glory in this little Cornish village, for Hugh Lethbridge came home; came home to those who thought him dead; came home to his father, who had disowned him; came home to his mother who had found God through his supposed death; came home to his sister who had fallen in love with his best friend; came home to his best friend who was seeking God and who, in seeking, found God and love and at the same time life; for Erskine did not die; came home to his wife and baby. All of these had given him up as dead. It was like the resurrection morning; was the glory of this Christmas time to this little Cornish village.

The whole family was gathered around the table Christmas morning. Since Hugh's death and the baby's birth Father Lethbridge had relented and with impetuous generosity, had taken Hugh's wife into his home. Isabella was there and Mr. Erskine, who was seeking God, was there; when in walked Hugh—the son and husband and father.

Few moments in literature are more dramatic.

They were singing an old hymn in lieu of a spoken blessing over the Christmas meal.

"But we never finished the last line; we heard a quick step in the hall outside, a bustling noise, then the dining-room door opened, and Hugh Lethbridge, pale and wan, but still tall and erect, clad in an officer's uniform, came into the room."

"For a moment he seemed to be dazzled by the light and walked with uncertain steps, while we stood, silent with amazement. Then he caught the look on his wife's face."

"It's Hugh!" she gasped.

And at the conclusion of his diary this man wrote down the fact that he had found God through life and love.

"For life and love are all!"

In Ibañez's "The Dead Command," the theme of the book is that the past and tradition rule the world. That the dead command. But the conclusion of this great Ibañez book is expressed in one tremendous sentence:

"No! The dead do not command! It is life that commands! And above life—love!"

And so it was that through life and love the man who was about to die found God and lived!

PART THREE: THERE ARE SERMONS IN NON-FICTION LITERATURE

Chapter X

Modern Tendencies in Sculpture

LORADO TAFT

Texts: *Psalm* 93-2. "Thou art from everlasting."
Psalm 101-3. "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes; I hate the work of them that turn aside!"

THE BOOK SERMON OF A NEED OF THIS AGE TO GET SOME "HINT OF ETERNITY" INTO ITS HEART

Modern Tendencies in Sculpture

"What? Do you use non-fiction books for book sermons?" a young preacher asked me recently.

"I certainly do. In fact I have gotten some of the most dramatic and some of the most spiritually helpful sermons out of non-fiction books."

"It doesn't seem possible to me. I can understand how you can get book sermons out of narrative poems such as you have told me about; and I can see the possibilities of fiction, but not of non-fiction books."

"All right, take 'Modern Tendencies in Sculpture,' by Lorado Taft. Some of the richest sermon material, some of the most spiritual and

unified lessons I have ever gleaned, I found in such a seemingly unproductive book as that."

It was because of that conversation that I have included in this book these illustrations of the possibilities of non-fiction literature for sermons. I have purposely selected Taft's recent book on sculpture because it sounds less productive than others. And yet I have found this book richer in spiritual treasure than any fiction book that I have read in a year.

What is Taft trying to do in this book?

He is trying to call the art world back to its "Hint of Eternity."

He says that sculpture must not lose its "Hint of Eternity."

Neither must human beings! Neither must the church! Neither must life lose its hint of eternity.

Why is Taft concerned about the drift of sculpture?

He is concerned about it because it is going the way of the age and not the way of the ages.

He is concerned about it because sculptors are losing their ideals. They are satisfied with the bizarre; they are producing *vers libre;* and they are impressionists.

The world of poetry, the world of painting, the world of art, and the world of spiritual life

is, as the Glass of Fashion puts it, "Talking nonsense on the edge of an abyss!"

That is what Taft is protesting against in the art world and that is what preachers must protest against in the spiritual world.

In a few words this book gives us preachers a new chance to clothe our invective and our urge, and our message and our warning against the frivolities of the present age in new clothes; in new figures of speech. It is the great message of the hour. It is the most needed challenge of the day.

The Inner Impetus

Lorado Taft in this great book says a thing that the Bible has said a hundred times in other words; and that is that a man cannot work out in his life any larger thing than he has in his soul.

"Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

"Whatsoever a man thinketh; that he is!"

Taft quotes Walter Pater as saying of sculpture:

"The various peoples are subject to the general limitations of their life and thought; they can but work outward what is within them."

Here is your first division. It is a striking phrase. It is as true in the human world as it is

in the art-world that a man cannot hide his sins. His face will be a living picture of his soul; good or bad his countenance will show it. No man or woman can work out any greater thing than that thing which is in their souls.

"Water always seeks its own level" is another way of putting this great spiritual lesson.

The Hint of Eternity

"If we sculptors could but learn that the most precious asset of our art is its hint of eternity. The truly great works have the air of permanence, the result of mass and simple contour. Destined to live, they smilingly bear in their very structure the guaranty of their immortality."

Taft shows that the modern tendencies in sculpture do not show this "Hint of Eternity." He demonstrates that the sculpture work of to-day is a passing thing; that it does not deal with the fundamental verities of life and love but that it is content with the passing whim of to-day's passion and play and pleasure.

What a phrase that is: "Hint of Eternity!"

It is slipped into this paragraph as if it were not a phrase to shake the dead awake. It sings of the need of the hour.

The phrase itself will make a sermon stand out forever in human hearts.

That phrase may be applied to the duty that

a mother, a father, a teacher, an editor, a preacher owes to a child. These who deal with human life owe it to humanity to get the hint of eternity into their messages and into their dealings with humanity.

The day is filled with writers who have no hint of eternity in their writings. The entire trend of social life seems to be to "eat, drink and be merry for to-morrow we die." The "flapper" is the result of this spirit. In "Prodigal Daughters" Hocking has given us a vivid picture of how this spirit is infecting our girls.

Men live and die forgetting that they have eternal souls.

The war bred a spirit of carelessness in thinking, carelessness in living; a lack of regard for the sacredness of home, church and God.

The only remedy for this is to get the hint of eternity back into our souls; to live for the ages rather than for the age.

This phrase will literally capture and make prisoner the hearts of an audience. It will sweep an audience into spiritual heights.

The Discovery of a Soul

Taft makes a marvelous contrast in this great book. He tells of an Italian sculptor named Biondi who, several years ago, did a piece of work in enduring marble called "The Saturnalia."

It is a group of figures, all drunken and debauched. Six old time revelers arm in arm stagger along a Roman road. A drunken man and wife; a boy, a harlot, a soldier and three drunken priests, all in life size figures, who stagger along, debauched and disgusting.

A high soul, like Taft, is naturally indignant that the noble art in which he is master has been degraded to make permanent any such debasing spectacle as this.

But fifteen years later Taft discovers another group by this same sculptor. It is called "Les Recluses Misérables." It is a group of poor women at prayer. The first figure is prostrate on the ground. The second two figures are bent over in an attitude of supplication. Back of them are a dozen miserable women, in sorrow and prayer.

Taft says of this change of heart: "One is happy however to record that this sculptor has had an astonishing change of heart. Consider his remarkable group exhibited under the French title 'Les Recluses Misérables.' Its pathos is equaled only by its sculptural reserve. It is not a realistic study but an interpretation, a translation into the legitimate language of art. The compulsory prayers of these unhappy ones may be of doubtful sincerity, but at the sight of the group I almost shouted, 'Another soul is saved!' Such

a conversion is quite unprecedented in the history of art. May Biondi hold to the new faith!"

Taft is filled with exultation over the conversion of an artist.

He sees here the regeneration of a soul.

If he were an old fashioned Methodist, he would shout. Indeed he does shout and admits it.

He talks in phrases that have long been familiar to preachers and the church. He speaks of the "discovery of a soul" and of "conversion."

Here is a vivid chance to contrast sin with salvation; night with day; a chance to show the regeneration of a Jean Valjean in art; a chance to show a Paul's experience on the road to Damascus when a Saul became a Paul.

Here is a chance to take a great book in another world for a vivid setting forth of the heart of our gospel; the saving of a soul; the regeneration of a life; the conversion of a man!

In his book, Mr. Taft makes this contrast more vivid by printing on the same page in black and white the results of this man's art before he was converted to higher thinking and the results of his art when he was regenerated. The "Saturnalia" is at the top of the page and may be easily described by the preacher to represent sin and a life of sin and what it produces.

At the bottom of the page is "The Prayer of the Recluses." It may be used to show what a

regenerated life will produce; a cleansed mind and soul:

"Oh glory of the lighted mind;
How dull I'd been, how dead, how blind!
The station brook to my new eyes
Was babbling out of Paradise;
The waters slanting through the rain;
Were shouting 'Christ is risen' again!' "

No preacher with any imagination at all can fail to see the possibilities of this division of the book sermon. It is enough to lift a man's preaching into the skies. It will give him a chance to preach the old "Gospel" and the heart of the "Gospel" in a new and a more vivid and appealing way. It will give him a new lease on God and Christ and human souls.

The Untrammeled Flight of a Soul

The last division of this book sermon is suggested by a phrase which Mr. Taft applies to a beautiful piece of memorial marble by Bitter. This is called the Kasson Memorial. It is located in Utica, New York, and is in memory of Mr. Kasson's wife.

It shows the edge of a grave. A woman's figure is lifting as in a transfiguration up and up from that grave toward the stars.

Her arms are crossed behind her head and she

is looking upward with a carefree and confident gaze as if she has caught sight of God's own countenance and has seen its light eternal.

With full breasts, flowing white robes, a beautifully spiritual face, rising from the grave to walk with God amid the stars, this white marble lifts all who look upon its beauty into higher realms.

Taft describes this piece of Bitter sculpture work as "a portraiture of human fears suddenly hushed in the presence of eternity."

He also says of this last piece of work by Bitter:

"It is significant that one of his last thoughts should be an expression of the soul in its untrammeled flight."

What a phrase that is to describe the flight of a soul free from the weight of sin. No soul ever flies which has the leaden weights of sin hanging to its feet.

Sin holds one down to the earth like the clipped wings of an eagle.

Sin is of the earth and earthy.

No man can fly high who has sin in his soul.

"Gaze starward
Stand high and unearthy;
Free-souled as a banner unfurled!

Be worthy, Oh Brother, be worthy,
For a God was the price of the world!"

The word of Joaquin Miller in verse links its heart with Taft's great phrase descriptive of the Kasson Memorial, "The untrammeled flight of the soul!"

Thank God for a soul untouched of sin; a soul that can look God in the eyes unashamed and unafraid; a soul that can take God by the hand man-fashion.

Jealousy, hate, envy, malice, lying, sinning holds a soul down and keeps it from untrammeled flight.

Only the soul that knows Christ for friend can be completely free from sin and completely untrammeled in its flight upward.

The preacher who cannot be thrilled into a higher type of preaching; into new glory with these great phrases is beyond praying for I am sure.

If his soul does not thrill to the expression "The hint of eternity" and "The untrammeled flight of a soul" he had better quit trying to thrill others spiritually.

And so it is that out of this great book, I found a new way of condemning the sin of this day and age and a new way of pointing the remedy for the sin of this age and the tendency of this age.

The modern tendencies in art are the same as the modern tendencies in human relationships; tendencies away from God and Christ and eternity. The only hope of the age is to get back to eternal things; back to God; back to Jesus Christ and back to sinlessness.

Chapter XI

The Glass of Fashion

Texts: *Isaiah* 33-11. "Ye shall conceive chaff; ye shall bring forth stubble!"
Isaiah 33-6. "And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times!"
Isaiah 31-1. "Woe unto them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses and trust in chariots because they are many; and in horsemen because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord!"

THE BOOK SERMON STORY OF THE PERIL OF OUR AGE, AND THE HOPE OF OUR AGE.

Who is not concerned, like Isaiah of old, about the drifting tendency of this age?

What preacher has not known the loose moorings in his particular harbor?

The tide is going out and the old anchors are breaking loose.

"The ancient, outworn puritanic traditions of right and wrong" are being scrapped along with many things, since the war.

"It is a drift age," the "Glass of Fashion" says.

We find the same thing in this great book as

we find in "Modern Tendencies in Sculpture" only in different fields. Where Mr. Taft is concerned alone with his own art, this book is concerned with the world of morals and spiritualities.

The world of painting is finding its "Drift Age" expression in the Cubist school; the world of poetry in its Vers Libre school; the world of Sculpture in bizarre work which has forgotten the "Hint of Eternity"; the social world in its "flappers," and its Margot Asquith and its Colonel Reppington's Diary; and the political world in its Bolshevism.

It Is a Drift Age

It is exactly like the age when Isaiah thundered his denunciations against sin. He used different figures of speech in his warnings. He talked of a people who had gotten to trusting in horses' legs and chariots; and what he was denouncing was an age that was trusting in materialism.

That is the spirit of the present age which this unknown author so strongly designates as a "Drift Age."

He sets forth the spirit of the present age first as the result of Darwinism:

"Darwinism not only justifies the sensualist at the trough and Fashion at her glass; it justifies Prussianism at the cannon, and Bolshevism at the Prison door."

It is clear to this writer that the explanation for the present "Drift Age" is because it has sold its soul to a materialistic conception of life. Anything goes with this kind of a philosophy.

The second way in which this writer sets forth the spirit of the age is in a group of stinging phrases.

The first phrase that he uses, as I have said, is that the age is "A Drift Age." We are like derelicts on the sea of life. We have no moral harbors; no anchors to God; no moorings to morality even.

This phrase can be applied to every phase of life in a modern city. It can be applied to young life, to business life, to international life, and to religious and church life.

No age but a "Drift Age" could produce a Fatty Arbuckle orgy, a Stillman divorce case, and a Kennedy murder all in the same month.

Something has been thrown away. The pilot has been dismissed and we are near the rocks. Such is the spirit of the book and its warning.

The second phrase that is used to burn this danger into our hearts is a phrase that reads, "We are talking nonsense on the edge of an abyss."

To bolster up his statement he uses a quotation from Alfred Noyes which shoots the matter into the souls of an audience as a thousand words of

prose will never do. It is Isaiannic in its strength and simplicity:

"The cymbals crash
And the dancers walk
With long, silk stockings
And arms of chalk;
Butterfly skirts
And white breasts bare
And shadows of dead men
Watching them there!"

It is an awful picture that these two writers set before us but it is an accurate picture. Only Isaiah could have made it stronger.

It Is an Age of the Degradation of Love

One of the most awful indictments the book makes is that this is an age when love is degraded.

He quotes from Mrs. Asquith's Diary and Colonel Reppington's Diary to which I shall refer more specifically later, to prove that love means little, any more, in life especially among certain social groups.

Old fashioned love and loyalty of man to woman is sneered at and laughed out of court.

"Almost the whole tendency of Fashion in this matter is towards the degradation of love. Almost every influence it possesses, so far as I am able to judge, is brought to bear on love with the

sole purpose of degrading what the sentimentalists only profaned."

Then he explains the cause of the widely prevalent domestic unhappiness of the world:

"Domestic unhappiness is a consequence of wrong thinking in society. Wrong-thinking is fatal to right living."

"The woman who knocks about," he says, has superseded "the particular woman," and that this is dangerous to love and home.

"There can be no time," says Lord Jeffrey, "in which the purity of female character can fail to be of the first importance to every community."

And so this flaming mind sees the age; as an age of "The Degradation of Love," an age that is a "Drift Age"; an age that is "Talking nonsense on the edge of an abyss."

In addition to these virile phrases, the author tries to make us see the age in which we are living through printing extracts from two diaries; one of which is that of Colonel Reppington and another that of Margot Asquith.

Colonel Reppington's Diary is filled with the trivial, if not the vulgar and lewd. It is supposed to be a diary of the great World War; but to read it one would hardly know that men were killed by millions and human destinies were at stake and that men were fighting for home, chil-

dren, country, honor, and the world's hope for democratic life.

Colonel Reppington seems to see nothing that happens save the manner in which a certain widow's bodice is dressed and how late she stayed up at night and how many "Rags" they attended together.

One critic called Colonel Reppington's Diary "A Worm's Eye View of the War" and that about sums it all up. However, the fact remains that there is an educated man alive in the world who could actually write such a diary and who could find an audience for it and a publisher to publish it. This is the great indictment of the age.

The other diary that he uses to illustrate the tendency of the day is that of Margot Asquith. This diary appeared first in the *Metropolitan Magazine* in America. It is the frank, open story of a woman who holds back nothing from the public gaze. Even the pangs of motherhood are not held as too sacred to lay out before the brazen gaze of all who may wish to see. Her escapades, her licenses, which are said to have caused the downfall of the Asquith ministry, are brazenly set before all the world to see.

The author of this book calls her "The Grandmother of the Flapper," which is a hard saying

but a true one; a saying that cuts its way straight to the heart of the matter.

These phrases and these two diaries are used to set forth the degradation of the age.

It is a tremendous indictment of materialism and sin.

With these phrases and these two diaries in his hands as bludgeons, the preacher who cannot flay sin and knock its head in, and leave it a battered and broken ruin ought to quit preaching.

These tremendous phrases and these two licentious diaries full of slime and crawling things give him a new vehicle to show on what "Treacherous Ground" the world is living to-day.

The Need of the Age

One can preach a thousand sermons and not find so vivid a way to set forth the need of an age or of an individual as through the striking illustrations and pictures and characters of this wonderful book.

The first need of the age is respect for home and love.

Then the author makes a vivid contrast between Mrs. Asquith and Mrs. Gladstone.

He tells of how Mrs. Gladstone was just as vivacious as Mrs. Asquith; just as charming personally; just as beautiful physically; but what a quiet reserve and dignity she had; what a deep

sense of God there was in her heart; and what a strength she was to Gladstone in his public life!

One of the most beautiful incidents set forth was the habit of the Gladstones of going each morning to a little church to start the day off with worship. The author tells of how Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone did this for years, walking a mile to the church each morning before he went to parliament.

Then the author tells of that beautiful custom the Gladstones had of rescuing fallen women and taking them into their home in order to rehabilitate the lives of these modern Magdalenes.

One night Gladstone was out on such an errand alone.

A friend saw him with a harlot. He begged him to let her go, fearing that if he were seen, his enemies might use it against him politically. Gladstone refused to listen.

Then the friend said, "What will Mrs. Gladstone say about her?"

Gladstone answered, "It is to Mrs. Gladstone that I am taking her."

In contrasting the Gladstones with the Asquiths, the author shows that one of the needs of this age, which is deeper than all other needs, is the need of good homes and a deeper reverence for love in home life.

Then he contrasts Colonel Reppington with Goethe the poet.

He tells of how Goethe started off in a frivolous way of living but of how something happened in his young life and he found that, while he was frivolous at the circumference, he was good at the heart of him. He uses a phrase with reference to Goethe which sums up all that he wants to set forth in his contrast of Goethe and Reppington and that is that "Goethe had an INNER EARNESTNESS."

That is what this age needs. It needs an "Inner Earnestness" which it cannot have with a materialistic conception of life and living.

Morality Is Not Enough

But these things are not enough according to this writer. It is necessary to have a new regard for home; and it is necessary to have an "Inner Earnestness" about life and things in general. The world cannot live without these changes. But there is something else needed to save the age.

Edith Cavell said when they were about to kill her, "Patriotism is not enough."

And so this author comes to the conclusion that to save this age "morality is not enough."

There must be something higher and deeper than morality.

There must be God.

He says:

"Man is a creature most dear to God. He is a citizen of a universe that is infinite. He is the child of a duration that is eternal. He cannot be dislodged from infinity and eternity any more than a day can be dislodged from a year. Loyalty to his moral nature is necessary to the understanding of his destiny, but his true happiness lies in the exercise of his spiritual faculties. Until he comprehends the greatness of his glory, and the unimaginable splendors of his inheritance, he must be a creature of unrest and ever greater confusion.

"NOW IN THIS IS THE EXCELLENCY OF MAN, THAT HE IS MADE CAPABLE OF A COMMUNION WITH HIS MAKER, AND, BECAUSE CAPABLE OF IT, IS UNSATISFIED WITHOUT IT!"

Linking this book up with prophecies of Isaiah; with his denunciations of sin and materialism; with his thunderings against the Margot Asquiths and the Colonel Reppingtons of his day; the preacher has a dramatic book presentation of sin; and materialism, and the remedy for the "Drift Age" is religion and Christ and God.

I have seldom attempted a book sermon that has so gripped the hearts of my people as the sermon on this great book "The Glass of Fashion" with its vivid picture of the sin of the day and its remedy for that sin; with its cutting and its

biting phrases; "A Drift Age," "An Age of the Degradation of Love," an "Age when we are talking nonsense on the edge of an abyss"; and its age of "The Woman About Town." And then its powerful phrases which suggest the cure for the sins of the age, such as the "Inner Earnestness" and a "Consciousness of God."

These are flaming phrases.

These indictments of materialism shall never die.

These flames of faith shall burn brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

This book is a great heart cry for righteousness and he who passes it on through private word or sermon is handing on a lighted torch of hope and love.

PART FOUR: HELPFUL SERMON OUTLINES

Chapter XII

FIVE HUNDRED SUGGESTIONS FOR BOOK SERMONS

I have been asked by the publishers, in order to make it practical and helpful to preachers, to add to this book as many suggestive books as I happen to know which may be used for book sermons. The following list I have myself used for book sermons or have had personal friends who have used them and I know them to be, and personally commend them, as full of material of spiritual value.

I have divided them into The Book Sermon in Fiction, in Non-Fiction Books, in Drama, in Narrative Poetry, in Short Poems, in Essays in Nature Books, in Books on Hymns.

THE BOOK SERMON IN FICTION

JOHN OXENHAM

"God's Prisoners"
"A Weaver of Webs"
"Flower of the Dust"

Methuen and Co.

BRUCE BARTON

"The Making of George Groton"

Doubleday, Page & Co.

PETER CLARK MACFARLANE
"Held to Answer"
Little, Brown & Company

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE
"A Certain Rich Man"
"In the Heart of a Fool"
The Macmillan Company

GUY FITCH PHELPS
"Mountains of the Morning"
Abingdon Press

ERNEST POOLE
"The Village—Russian Impressions"
"The Harbor"
"Blind, A Story of These Times"
"His Family"
"Beggars' Gold"
The Macmillan Company

BEATRICE KEAN SEYMOUR
"Invisible Tides"
Thomas Seltzer

JANE BURR
"The Glorious Hope"
Thomas Seltzer

EDGAR SALTUS
"Mary Magdalen"
Brentano's

CHARLES G. NORRIS
"Brass"
E. P. Dutton & Company

DAN B. BRUMMITT
"John Wesley, Jr."
The Methodist Book Concern

F. M. Dostoievsky
"Crime and Punishment"
The Macmillan Company

Charles M. Sheldon
"The Heart of the World"
Fleming H. Revell Company

H. G. Wells
"The Undying Fire"
"God the Invisible King"
"The Soul of a Bishop"
"Mr. Britling Sees It Through"
The Macmillan Company

George Eliot
"Romola"

Nathaniel Hawthorne
"The Scarlet Letter"
"The Marble Faun"

Victor Hugo
"Les Misérables"
"Ninety Three"
"Toilers of the Sea"
"The Man Who Laughs"
Houghton Mifflin Company

Knut Hamsun
"Growth of the Soil"
"Dreamers"
Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

Guy Thorne
"When It Was Dark"
G. P. Putnam's Sons

Winston Churchill
"The Inside of the Cup"
The Macmillan Company

OCTAVE FEUILLET
"La Morte"

BERNARD SHAW
"The Showing-Up of Blanco Posnet"
Brentano's

RALPH CONNOR
"To Him That Hath"
"The Sky Pilot"
"The Foreigner"
"Black Rock"
"The Prospector"
"The Doctor"
"The Man from Glengarry"
"Glengarry School Days"
"The Sky Pilot in No Man's Land"
George H. Doran Company

ALFRED SHEPPARD
"The Autobiography of Judas Iscariot"
Allen & Unwin

IRVING BACHELLER
"A Man for the Ages"
Bobbs-Merrill Company

JOSEPH HOCKING
"Prodigal Daughters"
"The Passion for Life"
Fleming H. Revell Company

MARY ROBERTS RINEHART
"The Truce of God"
George H. Doran Company

MAGDELEINE MARX
"Woman"
Thomas Seltzer

CORRA HARRIS

"My Son"

"The Circuit Rider"

George H. Doran Company

"The Circuit Rider's Wife"

D. Appleton & Company

BERNIE BABCOCK

"The Coming of the King"

Bobbs-Merrill Company

WILLISTON FISH

"The Great Way"

Mitchell Kennerly

HALL CAINE

"The Master of Man"

"The Deemster"

"The Woman Thou Gavest Me"

J. B. Lippincott Company

"The Christian"

"The Bondman"

"The Eternal City"

"The Prodigal Son"

D. Appleton & Company

JOHAN BOJER

"Life"

"The Power of a Lie"

"The Face of the World"

"Treacherous Ground"

"The Great Hunger"

"God and Woman"

Moffat, Yard and Company

THOMAS HARDY

"Jude the Obscure"

"The Return of the Native"

Harper & Brothers

FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT
"The Dawn of a To-morrow"
Charles Scribner's Sons

LYOF N. TOLSTOI
"Resurrection"
Thomas Y. Crowell Company

BLASCO IBANEZ
"The Cabin"
"The Shadow of the Cathedral"
"The Dead Command"
"Mare Nostrum"
"Blood and Sand"
"The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse"
E. P. Dutton & Company

A. B. CUNNINGHAM
"The Chronicle of an Old Town"
The Abingdon Press

JOHN AUGUSTINE CULL
"The Bride of Mission San José"
The Abingdon Press

MRS. ELIZABETH CHENEY
"The House of Love"
The Abingdon Press

Each one of these novels, in the hands of any preacher may become great living messages of spiritual power.

THE BOOK SERMON IN NON-FICTION LITERATURE

As I have illustrated in one complete chapter of this book, I have found the non-fiction book as productive of book sermons as fiction. Indeed in many cases I have found it more forceful and

spiritual. The list that I suggest here is a list of non-fiction books that I myself have used:

MAURICE MAETERLINCK
"The Life of the Bee"
Dodd, Mead & Company

ROBERT W. MACKENNA
"The Adventure of Life"
The Macmillan Company
"The Adventure of Death"
G. P. Putnam's Sons

JACOB RIIS
"The Making of an American"
The Macmillan Company

PANUNZIO
"The Soul of the Immigrant"
The Macmillan Company

CHARLES A. DINSMORE
"Atonement in Literature and Life"
Houghton Mifflin Company

JOHN MORLEY
"Life of William Ewart Gladstone"
The Macmillan Company

IAN MACLAREN
"Beside the Bonnie Briar Bush"
Dodd, Mead & Company

JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD
"God's Country"
Cosmopolitan Book Corporation

JOHN A. HUTTON
"Guidance from Robert Browning in Matters of Faith"
The Abingdon Press

M. Cameron
"The Seven Purposes"
Harper & Brothers

George Adam Smith
"The Life of Henry Drummond"
George H. Doran Company
"The Autobiography of Andrew Carnegie"
Houghton Mifflin Company
"The Americanization of Edward Bok"
Charles Scribner's Sons

Ray Strachey
"Frances E. Willard: Her Life and Work"
Fleming H. Revell Company

W. Garden Blaikie, D.D.
"The Personal Life of David Livingstone"
Fleming H. Revell Company

Ida M. Tarbell
"The Life of Lincoln"
The Macmillan Company

Lorado Taft
"Modern Tendencies in Sculpture"
University of Chicago Press

W. P. Livingstone
"Mary Slessor of Calibar"
George H. Doran Company

Dan Crawford
"Thinking Black"
George H. Doran Company
"The Glass of Fashion"
G. P. Putnam's Sons

Thomas Mott Osborne
"Within Prison Walls"
D. Appleton & Company

JOHN GRAHAM BROOKS
"An American Citizen"
Houghton Mifflin Company

G. A. STUDDERT KENNEDY
"I Believe"
"Lies"
George H. Doran Company

JOHN RUSKIN
"Seven Lamps of Architecture"
Charles Scribner's Sons

FREDERICK PALMER
"The Folly of the Nations"
Dodd, Mead & Company

LAUCHLAN MACLEAN WATT
"The Heart of a Soldier"
George H. Doran Company

THOMAS CHAPLAIN TIPLADY
"The Cross at the Front"
"The Soul of the Soldier"
Fleming H. Revell Company

HAROLD BEGBIE
"Twice Born Men"
George H. Doran Company

PETER CLARK MACFARLANE
"Those Who Have Come Back"
Little, Brown & Company

BISHOP FRANKLIN HAMILTON
"The Cup of Fire"
The Abingdon Press

LYNN HAROLD HOUGH
"The Little Old Lady"
The Abingdon Press

HENRY F. HENDERSON
"The Dream of Dante"
The Abingdon Press

LUTHER BURBANK
"The Training of the Human Plant"
The Century Co.

PRINCE KROPOTKIN
"Mutual Aid"
Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

THE BOOK SERMON IN DRAMA

The drama is productive of many great spiritual sermons. I have used them for years most effectively; Dr. Hyde illustrated their use in his Yale lectures and many preachers all over America have found the spiritual type of drama a new way to present truth. I suggest the following as book drama sermons which I myself have found strong and useful vehicles of spiritual truth:

JOHN DRINKWATER
"Abraham Lincoln: A Play"
Houghton Mifflin Company

ROBERT BROWNING
"Saul"
"The Ring and the Book"
"Pippa Passes"
"Pauline"
"Paracelsus"
"Sordello"
"A Blot on the 'Scutcheon"
Houghton Mifflin Company

J. W. von Goethe
"Faust"
Henrik Ibsen
"Peer Gynt"
"The Doll's House"
"When We Dead Awaken"
"Hedda Gabler"
Charles Scribner's Sons

Charles Rann Kennedy
"The Servant in the House"
Harper & Brothers

Jerome K. Jerome
"The Passing of the Third Floor Back"
Dodd, Mead & Company

Lew Wallace
"Ben Hur" (also in fiction)
Harper & Brothers

Maurice Maeterlinck
"The Blue Bird"
"Mary Magdalene"
Dodd, Mead & Company

Israel Zangwill
"The Melting Pot"
The Macmillan Company

William Shakespeare
"Hamlet"
"Twelfth Night"
"Macbeth"
John Masefield
"The Camden Wonder"
"The Locked Chest"
"The Tragedy of Nan"
"The Tragedy of Pompey the Great"

"The Faithful"
"Good Friday"

The Macmillan Company

THE BOOK SERMON IN NARRATIVE POETRY

Narrative poems I have found most prolific in great spiritual lessons with characters that stand out before people and dramatic dialogue that is remembered forever. John Masefield's two great narrative and dramatic poems, "The Everlasting Mercy" and "Hell-Hounds" which I have used to illustrate this type of sermon will show what I mean. I add the following list which I personally have used in my ministry:

FRANCIS THOMPSON
"The Hound of Heaven"

The Macmillan Company

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH
"The Ode to Duty"

JOHN MILTON
"Paradise Lost"
"Paradise Regained"

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON
"In Memoriam"
"The Princess"
"Mort D'Arthur"
"Maud"
"Enid"
"Vivian"
"Elaine"
"Guinivere"

The Macmillan Company

JOHN MASEFIELD

"The Widow in the Bye Street"
"Enslaved and Other Poems"
"The Dauber"
"The Everlasting Mercy"

The Macmillan Company

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

"The Ancient Mariner"

ALFRED NOYES

"A Belgian Christmas Eve"
"The Wine Press"
"The Trumpet of the Law"
"Black Bill's Honey-Moon"
"Sign of the Golden Shoe"
"The Flower of Old Japan"
"The Forest of Wild Thyme"
"Drake"
"Encelades"

Frederick A. Stokes Company

RUDYARD KIPLING

"Mulholland's Contract"

Doubleday, Page & Co.

EDWARD ROWLAND SILL

"Man, the Spirit"
"The Hermitage"
"The Fool's Prayer"
"Venus of Milo"

Houghton Mifflin Company

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

"Renascence"
"Interim"
"The Suicide"
"The Blue-Flag in the Bog"

Mitchell Kennerly

JOHN OXENHAM

"Christ in the City"

George H. Doran Company

"The Spread Table"

"The Gate"

"New Year's Day"

The Abingdon Press

"The Ballad of Lost Souls"

"The High Thing"

"Ex Tenebris"

American Tract Society

"The Vision"

"The Sacraments": Food, Fire, Work, Sleep, Love

George H. Doran Company

HENRY VAN DYKE

"God of the Open Air"

"The Toiling of Felix"

Charles Scribner's Sons

DANTE

"The Divine Comedy"

ANNA HEMPSTEAD BRANCH

"Thought of the Little Brother"

"Lazarus"

"The Watch-Tower of the Soul"

"The Madonna of the Earth"

"The Descendant of the Id"

"Ora Pro Nobis"

"The Sons of Cain"

Houghton Mifflin Company

SIDNEY LANIER

"Hymns of the Marshes"

"A Ballad of Trees and the Master"

Charles Scribner's Sons

EDWIN MARKHAM

"The Shoes of Happiness"
"The Juggler of Touraine"
"How the Great Guest Came"
"The Man With the Hoe"
"The Ascension"
"The Angelus"
"How Oswold Dined With God"
"The Cup of Pride"
"Song to the Divine Mother"
"The Hindered Guest"
"St. Elizabeth of Hungary"
"Inasmuch"
"The New Century"
"Muse of Labor"

Doubleday, Page & Co.

THE BOOK SERMON SUGGESTIONS FROM THE SHORTER POEMS

Some of the most alert, the most spiritual, and the most popular book sermons that I have ever preached I have found at the heart of a short poem; like a nugget in the heart of a mass of poetic ore. Some great writer has said that a verse may oft catch him that a sermon flees. That is true with a sermon founded on some short poem.

Every truly great poet is a preacher at heart anyhow. My dear friend, Edwin Markham, preaches a sermon in every poem that he writes and some of his shorter poems like "The Script

for the Journey" in "The Shoes of Happiness" are all of them great sermons in a few lines.

I quote a list of short poems from which I have extracted without much effort sermon themes that have captured the imaginations and hearts of my crowds. Many of these poems have scriptural texts as foundations and in most instances the poets have admitted that their poems come from the Bible.

FREDERICK LAWRENCE KNOWLES
"The Large View"
"Verita"
"Golgotha"
"Credo"
"The Steps"
"What is Heaven"?
"Out of the Depths"
"To the Eternal Spirit"
"Remedy"

The Page Company

RUDYARD KIPLING
"When Earth's Last Picture is Painted"
"Recessional"
"Tomlinson"

Doubleday, Page & Co.

EDWARD ROWLAND SILL
"Gifts of the Spirit"

Houghton Mifflin Company

WILLIAM HERBERT CARRUTH
"Each in His Own Tongue"

The Macmillan Company

EDWIN MARKHAM

"The Divine Strategy"
"Infinite Deeps"
"Man-Making"
"A Hushing Song"
"Your Great Hours"
"The Retort of Pericles"
"The Stone Rejected"
"Man-Test"
"The Deep of God"
"The Hidden Glacier"
"Anchored to the Infinite"
"One Music"
"Swung to the Void"
"The Place of Peace"
"Rest in Flight"

Doubleday, Page & Co.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

"God's World"
"Tavern"

Mitchell Kennerly

ANGELA MORGAN

"Hail Man!"
"Moss"
"Benediction"
"A Daughter's Tribute"
"To an April Bud"
"Assurance"
"In the Night Watches"
"A Petition"
"The Rose"

Dodd, Mead & Company

EDGAR LEE MASTERS

"At Decapolis"
"The Negro Ward"
"A Lady"
"The World's Desire"
"Winged Victory"
"Mrs. George Reese"
"Mary McNeely"
"Mabel Osborne"
"Davis Matlock"
"The Village Atheist"
"Julian Scott"
"Aaron Hatfield"
"The Mourner's Bench"

The Macmillan Company

VACHELL LINDSAY

"I Went Down to the Desert"
"The Soul of the City"
"Galahad-Knight Who Perished"
"The Drunkards in the Street"
"Foreign Fields in Battle Array"
"King Arthur's Men Have Come Again"

The Macmillan Company

JOHN OXENHAM

"On Eagle Wings"
"To You Who Have Lost"
"Through the Valley"
"The Master's Garden"
"In Every Man"
"A Prayer for Enlargement"
"The Call of the Dead"
"God's Handwriting"
"God Is"

George H. Doran Company

JOHN MASEFIELD

"Rest Her Soul"

The Macmillan Company

ROBERT W. SERVICE

"The Spell of the Yukon"
"The Call of the Wild"
"The Land of Beyond"
"Just Think"
"The Woman and the Angel"
"The Fool"
"The Lark"
"The Song of the Wage Slave"
"The Release"
"The Outlaw"
"If You Had a Friend"
"The Wonderer"
"The Quest"
"The Other One"

Barse & Hopkins

GEORGE STERLING

"The Wild Iris"
"The Evanescent City"
"The Builders"
"The Eternal Heart"
"The Soul Prismatic"
"The Guerdon of the Sun"

Dodge Publishing Company

AMOS R. WELLS

"The Prayer Meeting"
"A Sunday Song"
"A Living Hope"
"Three Measures"
"The True Preacher"
"A Song of Faith"

"His Miracle"
"Exclusions"
"Rebuilding"
"Pray"
"A Sufficing Bible"
"The Bible I Remember"
"Christ's Words"
"Death and Life"
"Purposes"
"The Mouth of God"
"Above the Heavens"
"The Walk"

Fleming H. Revell Company

JOYCE KILMER

"Pennies"
"Roofs"
"Trees"
"Main Street"
"Gates and Doors"
"The New School"

George H. Doran Company

ANNA HEMPSTEAD BRANCH

"Knowledge"
"An Unbeliever"

Houghton Mifflin Company

ALFRED NOYES

"Vicisti, Galilaee"
"The Loom of the Years"
"The Babe of Bethlehem"
"The Old Sceptic"
"Creation"
"Art"

"The Origin of Life"
"The Paradox"

Frederick A. Stokes Company

JOAQUIN MILLER

"Faith"
"Hope"
"Charity"
"Beyond Jordan"
"The Greatest Battle That Ever Was Fought"

Harr Wagner

STRICKLAND GILLILAN

"The Work is Through"
"The Universal Lesson"
"The Fun of Living"
"This Day"
"Folks Need a Lot of Loving"
"The Book of Life"
"The Easier Task"
"After School"

Forbes & Company

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

"Central Calm"
"The Shower"
"Unless"
"Afterwhiles"
"A Country Pathway"
"The Home Going"
"Old October"
"The Legend Glorified"
"A Song for Christmas"
"The Christ"

Bobbs-Merrill Company

JOHN DRINKWATER
"The Last Confessional"
"Holiness"
"The Defilers"
"Prayer"

Houghton Mifflin Company

Publishers Note:

Every one of the above poems are quoted in two books written by the author of this book. These books are "Giant Hours with Poet Preachers," and "Flames of Faith"; both of which are published by The Methodist Book Concern, 150 Fifth Ave., New York. We make this note for the sake of the preachers who may wish to get these quotations in two compact volumes rather than having to purchase the more than a dozen authors' books which are mentioned. The author's effort has been to make this book for preachers as practical as possible.

ESSAYS AND THE BOOK SERMON

Every alert preacher has found sermon suggestions in the stimulating essays of literature. I can easily count as the most popular series of sermons that I ever wrote a series that was suggested to me through the reading of Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus." This series I called by the simple title of "Man" and it ran: "Man as a Tool Using Animal," "Man as a Clothes Wearing Animal," "Man as a Laughing Animal," "Man as an Upright Animal," and "Man as a God-Fearing Animal" and "What God Can Make Out of a Man."

This gives a preacher a chance to talk about God in his relations to man from the beginning and about man in his relations to God. I have found the essays most stimulating and many a sermon has been clothed with new beauty because of the stimulus of the essayists. I give a list of essays below that have proven stimulating to me as sermon-producers:

THOMAS CARLYLE

"The World in Clothes"
"The World Out of Clothes"
"Pure Reason"
"Characteristics"
"Aprons"
"Pedagogy"
"Sorrows of Teufelsdrockh"
"The Everlasting No"
"The Everlasting Yea"
"Church-Clothes"
"Symbols"
"Old Clothes"
"Tailors"
"Critic of the Sun"
"The Hero as Divinity"
"The Hero as Prophet"
"The Hero as Poet"
"The Hero as Priest"
"The Hero as a Man of Letters"
"The Hero as King"

F. W. BORNEHAM

"The Other Side of the Hill"
"Faces in the Fire"

"The Luggage of Life"
"The Silver Shadow"
"The Golden Milestone"
"A Reel of Rainbow"
"Mushrooms on the Moor"
"Mountains in the Mist"

The Abingdon Press

The above list of books by F. W. Borneham contain something like twenty essays each, every one of them written by a preacher for preachers and are each of them full of illustrations and sermon suggestions. I have never bought a set of books so rich in suggestion as this set that I have mentioned.

NATURE BOOKS WHICH HAVE BEEN MOST SUGGESTIVE

Sermon suggestions from the great world of nature are timely in the spring and summer and fall. People like variety in preaching and will welcome being taken out into God's world almost any time of the year, especially in the spring and summer. I have given several series of this kind in my own sermonizing and have found them most popular. Last summer I gave a series on "Spiritual Interpretations of the Great Wonder-World of God." In this series I spoke on "The Grand Canyon—God Talking to Man"; "Lake Tahoe—The Lake of the Skies which Reflects the Face and Heart of God"; "The

Yosemite—God's Dream Come True"; "The Yellowstone National Park—God's Whisper of Love." I also gave a series which I called "Outdoor Men and Minds" which was later put out in book form by The Methodist Book Concern. This series included Sunday evening talks entitled "The Trees of the Bible"; "The Stars of the Bible"; "The Storms of the Bible"; "The Deserts of the Bible"; "The Birds of the Bible"; "The Rivers of the Bible" and "The Mountains of the Bible." I have just finished a series of nature sermons which I have called "The Spiritual and Biblical Interpretation of the Elements of Life" under the following titles:

"The Bible and Fire"
"The Bible and Water"
"The Bible and Light"
"The Bible and Earth"
"The Springs of the Bible"
"The Bible and Snow"
"The Roads and Highways of the Bible"

The suggestion for this series and an abundance of material and illustration came from the following nature books, which I linked up with the greatest nature book, which is the Bible:

JOHN MUIR
"Steep Trails"
"The Cruise of the Corwin"
"Our National Parks"

"Mountains of California"
"Travels in Alaska"
"Summers in the Sierra"
"The Story of My Boyhood and Youth"
Houghton Mifflin Company

GENE STRATTON-PORTER
"Birds of the Bible"
"Music of the Wild"
The Abingdon Press

"Friends in Feathers"
"Moths of the Limberlost"
"Homing with the Birds"
Doubleday, Page & Co.

GEORGE WHARTON JAMES
"The Lake of the Sky"

W. S. HARWOOD
"New Creations in Plant Life"
The Macmillan Company

BISHOP WILLIAM A. QUAYLE
"In God's Out of Doors"
"The Prairie and the Sea"
"Beside Lake Beautiful"
The Abingdon Press

EDWIN MARKHAM
"California the Wonderful"
Hearst International Library

JOHN BURROUGHS
"Wake-Robin"
"Winter Sunshine"
"Locusts and Wild Honey"
"Fresh Fields"
"Signs and Seasons"
"The Light of Day"
"Far and Near"

"Ways of Nature"
"Leaf and Tendril"
"Time and Change"
"The Breath of Life"
"Under the Apple Trees"
"Field and Study"

Houghton Mifflin Company

ERNEST THOMPSON SETON

"Two Little Savages"
"Wild Animal Ways"
"The Book of Woodcraft"
"Rolf in the Woods"
"Wild Animals at Home"

Doubleday, Page & Co.

"Wild Animals I Have Known"

Charles Scribner's Sons

SUGGESTIONS FOR BOOK SERMONS ON HYMNS

Sermons on the great hymns will always be timely and will always win the hearts of the people and also always give an opportunity to any alert and imaginative preacher to preach the old gospel in a new way. I have based book hymn sermons on the following useful books about the great hymns:

ALLAN SUTHERLAND

"Famous Hymns of the World"

Frederick A. Stokes Company

IRA D. SANKEY

"My Life and the Story of the Gospel Hymns"

Sunday School Times Company

ELIJAH P. BROWN
"The Real Billy Sunday"
Fleming H. Revell Company

S. TREVENA JACKSON
"Fanny Crosby's Story"
Fleming H. Revell Company

HOMER RODEHEAVER
"Song Stories of the Sawdust Trail"
Rodeheaver Co.

THE END

~~8562~~
EVANGELICAL
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

F

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

United Theological Seminary Library
MAIN BV4249.S8543 1922
Stidger, Will There are sermons in books
3 0645 0004 0764 9